**“Rooted in Him” The Present Truth, 12, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

“I am the root,” Jesus declares, by His angel. Revelation 22:16. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 769.1}

What is the office of the root? It gathers from the soil the elements needed for the growth of the plant. It takes in the moisture and the various minerals used in varying quantities by different plants in building up the stalk, and colouring the leaf or flower, and producing fruit. For instance, two different plants in the same soil may need different elements to feed upon, and the root of each will take the necessary proportions, choosing or rejecting materials, like the wise builder that it is. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 769.2}

It is the intelligent working of the Divine word which in the beginning caused the earth to bring forth plants, each after its kind. But the thought is that the root supplies the nourishment. The root provides the life that runs up into the plant and causes the beauty and fruit to appear. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 769.3}

“I am the root.” Jesus wants all to know that to every believer He is what the root is to the tree. He assumes the responsibility of sustaining life, and He knows what is essential to vigorous growth and fruit-bearing. This root cannot die, and in seasons when it would seem as though the hot winds of sin and trial were determined to blast and whither the life, the tried one need never fear a drying up of the supply. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 769.4}

“Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.” Jeremiah 17:7, 8. The heat beats upon the tree, but its root is a way beneath the soil, drinking in the life-giving water from the river, and sending it on to the outmost branches. Our Root, Jesus, the root springing up out of the dry ground, as Isaiah says, is planted by the water of the river of life, which flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb. No “blast of the terrible ones” can affect the life-giving supply, and as the branch receives sap from the vine and the tree from the root, so every soul that trusts God receives from Jesus of the very water of life that makes glad the city of God. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 769.5}

No wonder, then, that the leaf is green in the time of heat; that the fruit of Christ’s life appears in the midst of the drought which withers the distrustful until they are as the heath in the desert, having no living root. Jesus is the root. Leave the work and office of the root to Him, and let the life glorify Him by bearing fruit for which the root supplies and materials. “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not whither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.” Psalm 1:1-3. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 769.6}

**“Christ as Teacher” The Present Truth, 12, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

“And many of the people believed on Him, and said, When Christ cometh, He will do more miracles than these which this man doeth? The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning Him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take Him.” John 7:31, 32. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 769.7}

The trouble with the Pharisees and chief priests was that their character and teaching suffered by comparison with that of Jesus. “Never man spake like this man,” was the testimony of the officers who were sent to seize Him. “He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” The people listened to Him more readily than to them, and this aroused their jealousy. And the people knew that the priests sought His life. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 769.8}

Yet the priests and rulers might have retained the confidence of the people, even in the presence of Jesus, if they had only been willing to learn of Him, and accept His spirit and the wisdom that filled Him. For that, however, they were too proud, and so they took away the key of knowledge; they entered not in themselves, and those that would enter in, they hindered by every means in their power. Luke 11:52. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 770.1}

There was another reason why the wrath of the leaders of the Jews was aroused against Jesus. It was that the people who heard His living words of truth, not only lost relish for the old traditions that the elders retailed, but they actually came to know more than the leaders themselves. “If any man willeth to do His will, He shall know the doctrine.” The rulers were not willing to do, and therefore they did not know; while the poor people who desired to do God’s will knew the truth. David said, “I understand more than the aged, because I have kept thy precepts.” Psalm 119:100. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 770.2}

It is the earnest desire of every true teacher that the people shall learn, and the more they learn, the better he is pleased. If in time they surpass him in knowledge, then he will be but the more pleased. Even that is a testimony to the idea of his teaching. This will often be the case when one leads its hearers to the Word. If he does not limit by his own construction, but opens it, and allows the people to see for themselves, it will often be that souls will see more than he does. He who is not willing that this should happen, seeks his own glory, and not that of God; he preaches himself, and not the Word. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 770.3}

**“The Bible in Spain” The Present Truth, 12, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

A missionary in Spain gives a few facts to show how little Roman ecclesiastics in that country know of even their own corrupted version of the Bible. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 770.4}

“The archbishop of the see of Santiago Campostela, the capital of Galicia, one of the most important diocese of all Spain, on one occasion promised to give to a Protestant of that parish a Roman Catholic Bible in exchange for his Protestant Bible; but after spending a long time in looking for one, he had to confess that he could not find one in the episcopal palace-that he would ‘have to send for it to Barcelona,’ all across the peninsula!” {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 770.5}

One day a minister was talking with a priest. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 770.6}

“Allusion was made to the second commandment; and when he quoted the words, ‘Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them,’ the honest priest, instead of arguing, as an astuter man would have done, that Roman Catholics do not worship images, nor bow down to them, but only to the being or the spirit that they represent or suggest, he frankly admitted that they do worship them, and that their worship was permitted if not taught by the church; and he declared that he could not believe that the words quoted by my friend were to be found in the Bible, and much less in the Roman Catholic Bible. So a copy of the Bible sanctioned by his church was produced. He read and reread the fatal words, and could hardly believe his own eyes. At last, with hands clenched and teeth set, he turned on his heel, and with intense feeling exclaimed: ‘God made a mistake when He put that into the Bible!’ Poor man! he could not believe that his church could be guilty of deliberately suppressing that part of the Decalogue from its liturgies and from its catechisms; he could more easily believe that God had blundered! ‘And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.’” {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 770.7}

**“God’s Handwriting” The Present Truth, 12, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

In two instances of special interest the handwriting of God has been made visible to men,-when, engraved by His own finger on tables of stone, it came from out the clouds and thunders of Sinai, and again, when Christ, looking calmly and searchingly from eye to eye throughout the crowd of the pharisaic accusers assembled about Him, in silent dignity stooped and wrote with His finger in the sand. In the first instance, “He gave unto Moses, when He had made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God.” Of this unparalleled scene a writer has said,- {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 770.8}

“God purposed to make the occasion of speaking his law a scene of awful grandeur, in keeping with its exalted character. People were to be impressed that everything connected with the service of God must be regarded with the greatest reverence.The Lord said to Moses, ‘Go unto the people, and sanctify them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes, and be ready against the third day: for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai.’ During these intervening days all were to occupy the time in solemn preparation to appear before God. Their person and their clothing must be freed from impurity. And as Moses should point out their sins, they were to devote themselves to humiliation, fasting, and prayer, that their hearts might be cleansed from iniquity.... On the morning of the third day, as the eyes of all the people were turned toward the mount, its summit was covered with a thick cloud, which grew more black and dense, sweeping downward until the entire mountain was wrapped in darkness and awful mystery. Then a sound as of a trumpet was heard, summoning the people to meet with God; and Moses led them forth to the base of the mountain. From the thick darkness flashed vivid lightnings, while peals of thunder echoed and re-echoed among the surrounding heights. ‘And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.’ ‘The glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount’ in the sight of the assembled multitude. And ‘the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder.’ So terrible were the tokens of Jehovah’s presence that the hosts of Israel shook with fear, and fell upon their faces before the Lord. Even Moses exclaimed, ‘I exceedingly fear and quake.’ {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 770.9}

“And now the thunders ceased; the trumpet was no longer heard; the earth was still. There was a period of solemn silence, and then the voice of God was heard. Speaking out of the thick darkness that enshrouded Him, as He stood upon the mount, surrounded by a retinue of angels, the Lord made known His law. Moses, describing the scene, says: ‘The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; He shined forth from Mount Paran, and He came with ten thousands of saints; from His right hand went a fiery law for them.’” {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 770.10}

Thus the law came from the hand of God, graven with His own finger. In the second instance no clouds shrouded the skies, no thunders shook the heavens, no quaking mountain threatened to overwhelm those who beheld the strange scene. The only darkness and tumult were the hatred and fear in the quaking hearts of those who again read their own sins in the written words of God, but this time mercifully written in the sand, where a sweep of the hand would efface the faint traces of the terrible words which bore conviction, shame, and terror, to the heart of each, as in turn their eyes rested on the writing on the ground. But though the immediate cause of their confusion was known only to each individual heart, that they were confound it was clearly evident to many. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 770.11}

The occasion which the scribes and Pharisees chose, and which became their own undoing, was public. It was when Jesus was teaching in the temple, and “all the people” had come unto Him, that they brought before Him the guilty woman, and said,-“Now Moses and the law commanded us that such should be stoned: but what sayest Thou.” But while the assembled people looked on and listened with wonder, doubt, misgiving, pity, anxiety, to hear what reply He should make, no audible answer came from Jesus’ lips. He only stooped, with saddened face, and wrote with His finger in the sand. Then lifting Himself, with one piercing glance which each one felt pass into his very heart, He simply gave judicial utterance to the requirements of the law,-“He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.” He said no more,-than stooping He wrote again in the sand. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 771.1}

Did each man see copied there the page of his own record from the book of Judgment which should be opened at the last day, that, in the same order in which it will come to them, each, beginning with the eldest, read there his unanswerable reply, and went from His presence without a word? Utterly confounded before God and in their own hearts, and in the eyes of the public, the Pharisees went out speechless. Clothed now in simple human flesh, and not in the clouds and thunders of Sinai, He who gave the law, as agent of the Father, stood before them here and interpreted, in stern and God-like tenderness, the application of that law to their individual hearts and lives. And it was the word of God to them individually, audible only in the depths of each heart, while the assembled people looked on and wondered. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 771.2}

Yet while He emphasised here the fact of the immutability of the law, graven in tablets of stone, at the same time by word and act He showed how that the sins of the individual, whether it be of the sinful and repentant woman or the cruel and haughty-hearted Pharisees, God writes in sand, that if the delinquents but repentant turn from them, and so permit the effacement of the record, it may be obliterated and for ever blotted from sight and memory. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 771.3}

God is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever,-when He wrote the law on tables of stone and the sins of the wicked Pharisees in the sand,-the same. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 771.4}

**“The Promises to Israel. Mount Sinai and Mount Zion” The Present Truth, 12, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the Great King. God is known in her palaces for a refuge.” Psalm 48:1-3. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 771.5}

These words are sung in praise of the dwelling-place of God in heaven; for “the Lord is in His holy temple, the Lord’s throne is in heaven” (Psalm 11:4), and of Christ “who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,” (Hebrews 8:1) the Lord says, “Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion,” or, “upon Zion, the hill of My holiness.” Psalm 2:6. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 771.6}

Jesus Christ, the anointed King in Zion, is High Priest as well, a “priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek.” The Lord has said of “the Man whose name is The BRANCH,” that “He shall build the temple of the Lord; and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a priest upon His throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.” Zechariah 6:12, 13. So as He sits upon His Father’s throne in the heavens, he is “a Minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man.” Hebrews 8:2. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 771.7}

It was to this place-to Mount Zion, the hill of God’s holiness, and to the Sanctuary upon it, His dwelling place-that God was leading His people Israel when He delivered them from Egypt. When they had safely passed through the Red Sea, Moses sang these inspired words: “Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of Thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which Thou hast made for Thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which Thy hands have established.” Exodus 15:17. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 771.8}

But they did not get to Mount Zion, because they did not “hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.” “So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.” Yet God did not forsake them, for even “if we believe not, yet He abideth faithful; He cannot deny Himself.” So He instructed Moses to tell the people to bring offerings of gold and silver and precious stones, together with other material, and said, “Let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.” Exodus 25:8, 9. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 771.9}

This was not “the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched,” but one made by man. The tabernacle and its furniture were only “the patterns of things in the heavens,” and not “the heavenly things themselves.” Hebrews 9:23. It was but a shadow of the real substance. The cause of the shadow will be considered later on. But the believing ones of that olden time knew as well as Stephen did in later years, that “the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands,” as saith the prophet, “Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool; where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of My rest? Acts 7:48, 49. Solomon, at the dedication of his grand temple, said, “But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this house that I have built?” 2 Chronicles 6:18. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 771.10}

All of God’s really faithful children understood that the earthly tabernacle or temple was not the real dwelling-place of God, but only a figure, a type. So of the furniture which the sanctuary contained. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 772.1}

As God’s throne is in His holy temple in heaven, so in the type of that temple on earth there was a representation of His throne. A very feeble representation, it is true, as much inferior to the real as the works of man are inferior to those of God, yet a figure of it, nevertheless. That figure of God’s throne was the ark which contained the tables of the law. A few texts of Scripture will show this. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 772.2}

Exodus 25:10-22 contains the complete description of the ark. It was a box made of wood, but completely covered, within and without, with fine gold. Into this ark the Lord directed Moses to put the Testimony which He should give him. This Moses did, for afterward, in recounting to Israel the circumstances of the giving of the law, together with their idolatry, which led to the breaking of the first tables, he said:- {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 772.3}

“At that time the Lord said unto me, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first, and come up unto Me into the mount, and make thee an ark of wood. And I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables which thou brakest, and thou shalt put them in the ark. And I made an ark of shittim wood, and hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in mine hand. And He wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which the Lord spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly; and the Lord gave them unto me. And I turned myself and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they be, as the Lord commanded me.” Deuteronomy 10:1-5. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 772.4}

The cover of this ark was called the “mercy-seat.” This was of solid, beaten gold, and upon each end of it, a part of the same piece of gold, there was a cherub with wings outstretched. “Toward the mercy-seat shall the faces of the cherubim be. After these directions, the Lord said: “Thou shalt put the mercy-seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee,” which Moses did, as we have read. “And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.” Exodus 25:17-22. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 772.5}

God said that He would speak to them from “between the cherubim.” So we read, “The Lord reigneth; let the people tremble; He sitteth between the cherubim; let the earth be moved. The Lord is great in Zion; and He is high above all the people.” Psalm 99:1, 2. The cherubim overshadowed the mercy-seat, from which place God spoke to the people. Now mercy means grace, so that in the mercy-seat of the earthly tabernacle we have the figure of “the throne of grace” unto which we are exhorted to come boldly, “that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” Hebrews 4:16. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 772.6}

**FOUNDATION OF GOD’S GOVERNMENT**

The ten commandments on the two tables of stone were in the ark, under the mercy-seat, thus showing that the law of God is the basis of His throne and government. Accordingly we read, “The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof. Clouds and darkness are round about Him; righteousness and judgment are the foundation of His throne.” “Justice and judgment are the foundation of Thy throne; mercy and truth go before Thy face.” Psalm 97:1, 2; 89:14. R.V. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 772.7}

Since the tabernacle and all that it contained was to be made exactly like the pattern given to Moses, and they were “the patterns of things in the heavens,” it necessarily follows that the ten commandments on the tables of stone were exact copies of the law which is the foundation of God’s true throne in heaven. This enables us to understand more clearly how it is that “it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.” Luke 16:17. As long as God’s throne stands, so long must God’s law as spoken from Sinai remain unchanged. “If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?” Psalm 11:3. If the ten commandments-the foundation stones of God’s throne-were destroyed, the throne itself would fall, and the hope of the righteous would perish. But none need fear such a catastrophe. “The Lord is in His holy temple; the Lord’s throne is in heaven,” because His word is settled for ever in heaven. That is one of “the things which cannot be shaken.” {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 772.8}

Now we are able to see that Mount Sinai, which is a synonym for law, and which at the giving of the law was really the embodiment of the awful majesty of the law, is also a type of God’s throne. Indeed, for the time being it was actually God’s throne. God was present upon it with all His holy angels. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 772.9}

Moreover, the awful terror of Sinai is only the terror of God’s throne in the heavens. John had a vision of the temple of God in heaven, and of the throne, with God seated in it; “and out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices.” “And the temple of God was opened in heaven; and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament; and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake and great hail.” “A fire goeth before Him.” {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 772.10}

The terror of God’s throne is the same terror that was at Sinai-the terror of the law. Yet that same throne is “the throne of grace,” to which we are exhorted to come with boldness. Even so “Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was” on Sinai. Exodus 20:21. Not only Moses, but “Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel” went up into the mount; “and they saw the God of Israel; and there was under His feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of Israel He laid not His hand; also they saw God, and did eat and drink.” Exodus 24:9-11. If it had not been so, then we should not have had a positive demonstration of the fact that we may indeed come with boldness to the throne of grace-that awful throne whence comes lightnings and thunderings and voices-and find mercy there. The law makes sin to abound, “but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” The cross was at Sinai, so that even there was God’s throne of grace. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 772.11}

For let it be remembered that it is only “by the blood of Jesus” that we have “boldness to enter into the holiest.” Hebrews 10:19. But for that blood it would be as certain death for us to come to God’s throne and take His name upon our lips, as it was for anyone who should lightly approach Sinai. But Moses and others did draw near to God on Sinai, even into the thick darkness, and did not die, a sure evidence that the blood of Jesus saved them. The living stream from Christ was flowing at Sinai, even as “the pure river of water of life, clear as crystal” proceeds “from the throne of God and of the Lamb.” Revelation 22:1. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 772.12}

That stream comes from the heart of Christ, in which the law was and is enshrined. Christ was the temple of God, and His heart was God’s dwelling-place. We know that the stream-living water for the people-came from Christ at Sinai, and that the blood and the water, which agree in one, came from His side at Calvary-a living stream for the life of the world. Yet although the cross of Calvary is the highest possible manifestation of the tender mercy and love of God for man, it is a fact that the terrors of Sinai-the terrors of God’s throne-were there. There was thick darkness and an earthquake, and the people were filled with an awful dread, because there God displayed the fearful consequences of violation of His law. The law in its terror to evildoers was at Calvary as well as at Sinai or in the midst of the throne of God. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 773.1}

When John saw the temple in heaven, and God’s awful throne, he saw “in the midst of the throne” “a Lamb as it had been slain.” Revelation 5:6. So the river of water of life from the midst of the throne of God, proceeds from Christ, even as did the stream from Sinai and Calvary. Sinai, Calvary, and Zion, three sacred mountains of God, all agree in one to those who come to them in faith. In all we find the terrible, death-dealing law of God flowing to us in a sweet and refreshing stream of life, so that we may sing: {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 773.2}

*“There’s a wideness in God’s mercy,  
Like the wideness of the sea,  
There’s a kindness in His justice  
That is more than liberty.” {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 773.3}*

**“Catholic and Mohammedan” The Present Truth, 12, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

The conflict between Catholic and Mohammedan has, from the earliest times, been a bitter one, in which it is difficult to say which side has been less merciless than the other. “Quarter was seldom given in the field,” says Gibbon of the ninth century wars; “those who escaped the edge of the sword were condemned to hopeless servitude, or exquisite torture; and a Catholic emperor relates, with visible satisfaction, the execution of the Saracens of Crete, who were flayed alive, or plunged into caldrons of boiling oil.” {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 773.4}

**“Baptism” The Present Truth, 12, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

Baptism .-In a recent historical address, Dr. Sinclair, Archdeacon of London, commented on the attitude of the Church of England as regards the substitution of sprinkling for baptism. He said:- {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 774.1}

We may point out that the universal modern practice of baptizing by sprinkling, which has put one weighty and popular argument into the hands of the Baptists, is not in accordance with the mind of the Church of England. She permits sprinkling in exceptional cases, but she requires immersion as her rule. We may argue from this permission quite fairly that she considers sprinkling sufficient; but if the clergy of the Church of England would adhere to the rule of the Church, they would not only remove a cause of scruple to some minds, but to all minds they would give a new force and meaning to the symbolical language of Holy Scripture which was founded on the ancient and fuller ceremonial. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 774.2}

It illustrates very aptly the result that must follow whenever the church attempts to put itself in the place of Christ, and begins to issue permissions or commands regarding doctrine. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 774.3}

**“Items of Interest” The Present Truth, 12, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

-It has been found that nearly all the rivers in West Africa, within 100 miles east and west of Ashantee, yield gold. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 782.1}

-The proprietor of the London Echo has devoted all its profits for twenty years to the erection of public libraries, cottage hospitals, etc. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 782.2}

-The subject of duelling has been discussed hotly on the Continent recently, and public opinion seems inclined to call murder by duel by its right name. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 782.3}

-The highest place in the world regularly inhabited is stated to be the Buddhist monastery Heine, in Thibet, which is about 16,000 feet above sea level. The next highest is Calera, a railway station in Peru, which is located at a height of 15,635 feet. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 782.4}

-Late rains in a portion of the Indian districts threatened with famine have improved the crop prospects very much. The affected area is so large, however, that there seems no escape from severe suffering among the natives, which has already begun. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 782.5}

-By way of illustration of the size of London, it may be stated that last year there were 13,141 new houses built, 21,461 fires, and 44,742 persons involved in street accidents. Of these latter 1,298 were killed, about twelve times as many as the passengers killed in a year on all the railways of thr United Kingdom. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 782.6}

-English is spoken by 45,000,000 persons in the British Isles, by probably 57,000,000 of the 60,000,000 inhabitants of the United States, by 4,000,000 persons in Canada, by 3,000,000 in Australia, by 3,700,000 West Indians, and by 1,000,000 in India and other British colonies, bringing the total of the English-speaking race to over 100,000,000. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 782.7}

-A great dock strike was declared in Hamburg last week. About 10,000 men struck, and it is said that a great strike is imminent in this country also. The dock workers have been perfecting an international organisation, and they expect to be able to secure united action in America, England, and on the Continent. It is the largest federation of workers yet formed. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 782.8}

-Siberia promises to become an important mining field, as it is rich in all kinds of minerals. The discovery of valuable iron deposits has just been reported from Eastern Siberia, and experts say that it is capable of making steel that cannot be surpassed. The railway is changing the prospects of the country, and altogether it would seem that Russia is to lose its great prison district. The change may enable many convict colonists to better their conditions. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 782.9}

-It is said that the cities in Russia are rapidly increasing in population, the tendency there being from the country to the towns, and manufacturing is increasing. In 1867 Warsaw contained less than 200,000 people; to-day it contains nearly 600,000. Moscow contained 650,000 in 1867; in next year’s census it is likely to show a population of 1,500,000. The railways are spreading everywhere ; 40,000 miles are now finished, and they are rapidly increasing {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 782.10}

**“Back Page” The Present Truth, 12, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth.” Matthew 7:7, 8. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 784.1}

If we seek, with this assurance, it is worth while to know what to seek; what it is that is worth finding. The same One who gives the assurance that we shall find, tells us what to seek. “Seek ye the Lord while He may be found.” Isaiah 55:6. “Seek the Lord, and His strength; seek His face evermore.” Psalm 105:4. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 784.2}

Here is something that is certainly worth finding. If we find the Lord, we find His strength. He is the Almighty, therefore whoever finds Him becomes “strengthened with all might according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness.” Colossians 1:11. In His presence is fulness of joy. Not only so, but “in Him all things consist” (Colossians 1:17, R.V.), and therefore he who finds the Lord has with Him all things. Romans 8:32. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 784.3}

But is the Lord, with all this treasure, hard to find? Nay, quite the contrary; “he that seeketh, findeth,” because He is not far from every one of us. Acts 17:27. More than this, He is seeking us; “for the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” Luke 19:10. Since He is seeking us, what can possibly hinder us from finding Him, if we also seek Him; each seeking the other, we are sure to come together. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 784.4}

The statement that the Lord came to seek the lost, points to the fact that man was once with Him, but wandered away. “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way.” Isaiah 53:6. When people sin, they imagine that God is angry with them, and that He has turned away from them. Not so; it is they who turn away and hide from Him, while He seeks them. Adam and Eve, after their sin, “hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.” Genesis 3:8. But the Lord did not hide from them; on the contrary, He sought them, and when they responded to His call, they found each other. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 784.5}

Therefore, since it is we who “hid as it were our faces from Him” (Isaiah 53:3), and He is all the time seeking us, it is evident that all we have to do to seek and find Him is to turn around and look up. How easy the way, and how blessed the result! Let each one, then, make these words his own: “When Thou saidst, Seek ye My face, my heart said unto Thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek,” assured that the finding will be sure, speedy, and glorious. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 784.6}

It seems that early in the century Fulton, the inventor of the steamboat, had devised a torpedo, and tried to get France and then England to adopt it in naval warfare. It was rejected on the ground that it was contrary to military and naval codes to use such atrocious methods of destruction. What progress in the art of killing the nations have since made, in these days of torpedo-boats and dynamite guns. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 784.7}

“A Roman Catholic has been elected to a tutorial fellowship at Balliol, Oxford. This is the first instance,” says the Daily Mail, “of a Roman Catholic being elected to such a position, and it is worthy of special note that he is to be a Tutor in History.” Roman Catholics are able to report many significant “first instances” nowadays. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 784.8}

Two milk-carriers were called before the Lambeth Police Court last week for crying and selling their milk on Sunday. The action was taken by the Quiet Sunday Society, under the Act of Charles II., as amended by the Sunday Prosecution Act of 1871, which, although it lasted but one year, has been continued by the Expiring Law Continuance Act every session since. Disapproval of the summons by the Court were shown by the fact that only a bare conviction was granted, though costs being allowed, or penalty affixed,-a warrant for the forfeiture of the goods, permissible under the law, being also refused. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 784.9}

“There is none other name,” the Word says, than that of Jesus, by which salvation comes. How effectually Mary has been placed by Roman Catholics in the stead of Christ is seen by the statement in the Roman Breviary, “Mary, thou art the only hope of Christians.” {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 784.10}

The man who is too proud to acknowledge that he has been in error, is simply ashamed to declare that he knows more to-day than he did yesterday. Therefore the one who rejects the reproof which shows him his error, despises wisdom; but “he that heareth reproof getteth understanding,” and “abideth among the wise.” Proverbs 15:31, 32. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 784.11}

Signs indicate that a new era in strikes is dawning. They are to become international, and one of the greatest strikes in industrial history is threatening. The labour world is becoming more and more familiarised with the notion of meeting injustice with revolution, and the elements are at work which will surely lead to scenes of violence. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 784.12}

Four trained nurses are to sail this week for Calcutta, to reinforce our Society’s workers in India. {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 784.13}

**“Trust in Adversity” The Present Truth, 12, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

Trust In Adversity .-God’s saving grace is not for prosperous times only. Yet the natural thing is to distrust God when adversity comes-the very time of all times when the confidence should be held fast, without wavering. “Although the fig tree shall not blossom,” says Habakkuk, “neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.” {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 784.14}

**“‘Give ye them to Eat’” The Present Truth, 12, 49.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Give ye them to Eat.” -The world is so large and the people who do not know that the Word of the Lord is food are so many that not one who is partaking of the Lord’s bounty can forget that He is debtor to all men. In the populous countries of Asia, with their great need, the missionary feels this keenly. One of our Indian workers writes: “Think of the awful procession of eight and a half million persons in this land who go down through the gates of death every year, the great majority of whom die in their sins, and die unwarned. The figures are too vast to appreciate. Stated another way, it means that about one thousand souls in this land die every hour of the year.” {PTUK December 3, 1896, p. 784.15}

**“Unlettered Learning” The Present Truth, 12, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

“And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learn?” John 7:15. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 785.1}

The Greek word here rendered “letters,” is the word meaning writings or scriptures. A learned man, one well acquainted with books, is commonly called “a man of letters,” or a literary man. Now there are many books, but only one that is so prominent as to be sufficiently designated by the term “the Book,” and that is the Bible; for the word Bible means simply book. So “the writings,” when used in the Bible without qualification, mean the sacred writings, or the Scriptures. The text above quoted should therefore be rendered, as it is in some versions, “How does this man know the Scriptures, never having learned?” {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 785.2}

Like John the Baptist, Jesus never studied in the Jewish schools. John was “in the deserts till the day of the showing unto Israel.” Luke 1:80. So Jesus dwelt at Nazareth, subject to His parents, a humble carpenter, until He came prominently before the people at His baptism. Yet no two teachers ever aroused greater interest among the people, or attracted more attention. People flocked to hear them, and hung on their words. The officers of the law said of Jesus, “Never man spake like this man,” and the people were astonished at His teaching; “for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 785.3}

That Jesus had not studied in the schools of the doctors of the law,-the theological seminaries of that time,-is shown by the questions which the priests and elders put to Him as He was teaching in the temple, “By what authority doest Thou these things, and who gave Thee this authority?” Matthew 21:23. Yet He had wisdom, both in asking and in answering questions, that put to silence all the learned doctors, while His teaching was so simple that “the common people heard Him gladly,” because they could understand Him; and the ability to put deep things into simple, easily-understood language is the mark of the greatest wisdom. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 785.4}

How did Jesus get this wonderful knowledge? From the Word of God. All Jewish children were taught the Book of the Law, according to the command of the Lord by Moses. “These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shall teach them diligently unto thy children and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkedest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.” Deuteronomy 5:6, 7. Many parents of course did this carelessly, and, especially in later times, mingled with their instruction many idle traditions learned from the Doctors; but those children who had faithful parents knew the Holy Scriptures from childhood. With the child Jesus this was no routine task, for He says, “I delight to do Thy will, O my God; yea, Thy law is within My heart.” Psalm 40:8. The Holy Scriptures, studied in the humble house in Nazareth, and opened to His understanding by the Spirit of God, were the beginning and the sum of all the wisdom that Jesus had. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 785.5}

As with Jesus Himself, so with those whom He chose to accompany Him, and to send forth to preach,-they were men in humble station, not having studied in the theological schools. Their learning was derived from the Scriptures. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 786.1}

The rulers were astonished at the power and knowledge of these humble fishermen preachers, as they had been with Jesus. We are told that when the rulers “saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled, and took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.” Acts 4:13. The word ignorant is unfortunate, as applied to the apostles. “Unlearned” they certainly were, according to the fine standards of the school; but they were not ignorant. Why then do we have such a statement in the sacred record?-In reality we do not, and the occurrence of the word in our English version is an interesting illustration of the very point we are studying. Thus:- {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 786.2}

The two words, “ignorant men,” in Acts 4:13 are from one Greek word, idiotai, the plural of idiotas. The reader will at once recognise in this our common word idiot, and will at once conclude that the English rendering is much more mild than the Greek text. But wait a moment. The primary and ordinary meaning of this Greek word is,-“a private person,” one of the common people. But as certain public teachers began to style themselves philosophers, and to claim for themselves a monopoly of wisdom, so that a man must have a recommendation from them-a certificate that he had “been through” the prescribed course-before he could have any standing as a scholar, it came about that all who had not such public recognition were considered ignorant. The fact that our translators adopted this secondary use of the Greek word instead of its real meaning, shows how much they were under the influence of the same spirit. The Danish and Norwegian version have “laymen” in the place of “ignorant men,” and the German has “men of inferior condition.” {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 786.3}

Here is encouragement, and a lesson. The encouragement is that people in the most humble and despised walks of life may, by devoted study of the Word from a sincere desire to know and do God’s will, acquire wisdom that will astonish even the worldly wise. Deuteronomy 4:5, 6. See also Proverbs 2:1-9. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 786.4}

The lesson, is that in the church of Christ are no ranks and degrees-no class distinctions. The church, following in the steps of the schoolmen of heathen times, have made two classes,-clergy and laity,-that is the special, elect class, who have the keys of knowledge, and the people, who are to take what the clergy are pleased to dole out to them. But the Scriptures teach us that all in the primitive, true church were laymen, that is, they were simply, ordinary people, whose only distinction from others was that which the Holy Spirit gave them. Jesus, Himself an ordinary labourer, chose fishermen and sent them forth to preach, and because they were thus sent forth they are called apostles. But they were laymen, and such they would be called to-day, if they were alive and in England or America. That those who teach the Word should form a special class, distinguished from other people by title, dress, etc., was not only not contemplated by the Lord, but was directly opposed. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 786.5}

It is true that “there are diversities of gifts,” and all men have not the same work, yet all in the church our brethren, and the greatest among them is he who does the most service. Let therefore no one be puffed up in his own mind with the thought that as a preacher he is above all others in the church, and let no one be discouraged because his state is lowly. It was Tyndale’s declaration that he would “make the boy that drives the plough in England to know more of Scripture than the Pope does.” That possibility is now before every ploughboy, and he who truly improves it, although his name be unknown outside of his neighbourhood, has a place in the church infinitely higher than that of the Pope. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 786.6}

**“Discontent” The Present Truth, 12, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

Not long ago a clergyman wrote in one of the newspapers that he was now devoting himself to preaching the “Gospel of Discontent”-that is, social reform. It is a current phrase to express the line of agitation which is going on in all parts of the country. The selfishness of the rich and the inequalities and hardships of life are being inveighed against on every side, and the Gospel of Discontent finds ready acceptance. One cannot fail to notice the frequency with which newspapers are discussing the best way of getting the ideal commonwealth, and within a year or two the idea of a revolution in order to enter the promised land of equality and prosperity has found increasingly frequent expression. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 786.7}

About a hundred years ago, in France, writers were engaged in just such work. They preached the Gospel of Discontent. Conditions were bad. The poor were trodden down until they had little energy to face present injustice. The social millennium was pictured by writers and workers. At last the disciples of discontent decided to inaugurate the new era. But when once human passion was let loose, and covetousness in the masses met the covetousness of the classes, violence began, and instead of a millennium they had a massacre. The same elements are working out in nearly all lands. The Bible shows that not the least of the troubles which will cause the nations to destroy themselves will be this very social trouble. It is a good time for Christians to learn the Gospel of Contentment which Paul preached. Philippians 4:11-13. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 786.8}

**“Philip II.” The Present Truth, 12, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

The persecutor is such not because he is worse than other men naturally, but merely because he is led by evil principles, and has the power to give effect to them. A recent writer, in the Fortnightly Review, gave some fresh light on the character of Philip II. of Spain, who bears in history one of the most infamous reputations of all who have tried to crush out Protestantism. But in his whole life he was evidently of refined and gentle temperament, delighting in his family, and in turn being regarded by his own with affection. The writer says:- {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 786.9}

“Truly the human heart is a hard book to decipher. The man who could gaze upon human creatures undergoing the tortures of the damned by his orders because they differ from him, has been handed down to eternal infamy-and perhaps rightly so-on the strength of his public acts. It is reasonable to ask that his tyranny and cruelty should be forgotten, because there was a soft spot even in his stony heart for those who were nearest him, that the sickening fumes of scorching human flesh should be overpowered by the scent of flowers which Philip loved, or that the shrieks of the myriad martyrs should be drowned by the song of his nightingales; but, at least, the facts I have adduced prove that he was a human creature and not a fiend, and go far to support my contention that he was conscientiously and devotedly convinced that he was acting for the best in ruthlessly crushing those whom he looked upon as the enemies of God and society.” {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 786.10}

**“The Promises to Israel. The Covenants of Promise” The Present Truth, 12, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Wherefore remember that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.” Ephesians 2:11, 12. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 787.1}

An idea that prevails quite extensively is that God has one covenant for Jews and another for Gentiles; that there was a time when the covenant with the Jews utterly excluded the Gentiles, but that now a new covenant has been made which concerns chiefly, if not wholly, the Gentiles; in short that the Jews are, or were, under the old covenant, and the Gentiles under the new. That this idea is a great error, may readily be seen from the passage just quoted. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 787.2}

As a matter of fact, Gentiles, as Gentiles, have no part whatever in God’s covenants of promise. In Christ is the yea. “For how many soever be the promises of God, in Him is the yea; wherefore also through Him is the Amen, unto the glory of God through us.” 2 Corinthians 1:20. The Gentiles are those who are without Christ, and so they are “strangers from the covenants of promise.” No Gentile has any part in any covenant of promise. But whosoever will may come to Christ, and may share in the promises; for Christ says, “Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.” John 6:37. But when the Gentile does that, no matter what his nationality may be, he ceases to be a Gentile, and becomes a member of “the commonwealth of Israel.” {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 787.3}

But let it be noted also that the Jew, in the common acceptation of the term, that is, as a member of the Jewish nation, and a rejecter of Christ, has no more share in the promises of God, or the covenants of promise, than the Gentile has. That is only to say that nobody has any share in the promises, save those who accept them. Whoever is “without Christ,” whether he be called Jew or Gentile, is also “without God in the world,” and is a stranger from the covenants of promise, and an alien from the commonwealth of Israel. This the text first quoted teaches us. One must be in Christ in order to share the benefits of “the covenants of promise,” and be a member of “the commonwealth of Israel.” To be “an Israelite indeed,” therefore, is simply to be a Christian. This is as true of the men who lived in the days of Moses, as of those who lived in the days of Paul, or those who live to-day. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 787.4}

Some one will probably think to ask, “How about the covenant made at Sinai? Do you mean to say that it was the same as that under which Christians live, or that it was as good? Are we not told that it was faulty? and if it was faulty, how could life and salvation have come through it?” {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 787.5}

Very pertinent questions, and ones that are easily answered. It is an undeniable fact that grace abounded at Sinai-“the grace of God which bringeth salvation”-because Christ was there with all His fulness of grace and truth. Mercy and truth were met together there, and righteousness and peace flowed as a river. But it was not by virtue of the covenant that was made at Sinai, that mercy and peace were there. That covenant brought the people nothing, although everything was there for them to enjoy. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 787.6}

The comparative value of the two covenants which stand related to each other as “the first” and “the second,” the “old” and the “new,” is thus set forth in the book of Hebrews, which presents Christ as High Priest, and contrasts His priesthood with that of men. Here are some of the points of superiority of our great High Priest over earthly high priests:- {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 787.7}

1. “Those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by Him that said unto Him, The Lord sware, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.” Hebrews 7:21. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 787.8}

2. They were priests but for a short time, because “they were not suffered to continue by reason of death;” therefore there was a continual change and succession. But Christ “ever liveth,” and therefore He has “an unchangeable priesthood.” Earthly priests continued to be priests as long as they lived, but they did not live long. Christ also continues to be priest as long as He lives, and He is “alive for evermore.” {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 787.9}

3. The Levitical priests were made priests “after the law of a carnal commandment.” Their priesthood was only outward, in the flesh. They could deal with sin only in its outward manifestations, that is, actually not at all. But Christ is High Priest “after the power of an endless life”-a life that saves to the uttermost. He ministers the law in the Spirit. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 787.10}

4. They were ministers only of a worldy sanctuary, which man made. Christ “is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.” {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 787.11}

5. They were mere sinful men, as was shown by their mortality. Christ is “declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead” (Romans 1:4), and so He is “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.” Hebrews 7:26. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 787.12}

Now “by so much was Jesus made surety of a better covenant.” 1 Hebrews 7:22. The covenant of which Christ is Minister is as much better than that of which the Levitical priests were ministers, whose priesthood dated only from the making of the covenant at Sinai, as Christ and His priesthood are better than they and their priesthood. That is to say, the covenant of which Christ as High Priest is Minister, is as much better than the covenant that dates from Sinai, as Christ is better than man; as heaven is higher than earth; as the sanctuary in heaven is greater than the sanctuary on earth; as the works of God are better than the works of the flesh; as “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” is better than “the law of a carnal commandment;” as eternal life is better than a life that is but “a vapour that appeareth for a moment, and then vanisheth away;” as the oath of God is better than the word of man. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 788.1}

**THE DIFFERENCE**

And now we may read wherein this vast difference consists: “But now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the Mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, He saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in My covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people; and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.” Hebrews 8:5-12. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 788.2}

The following facts must stand out very prominently to the thoughtful reader of this text:- {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 788.3}

1. Both covenants are only with Israel. Gentiles, as we have already seen, are “strangers from the covenants of promise.” It is always admitted and even claimed that they have nothing to do with the old covenant; but they have even less connection with the new covenant. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 788.4}

2. Both covenants are made with “the house of Israel;” not with a few individuals, nor with a divided nation, but “with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,” that is, with all the people of Israel. The first covenant was made with the whole house of Israel, before they were divided; the second covenant will be made when God shall have taken the children of Israel from among the heathen, and made them one nation, when “they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all.” Ezekiel 37:22, 26. But concerning this we shall have more further on. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 788.5}

3. Both covenants contain promises, and are founded upon them. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 788.6}

4. The “new covenant” is better than the one made at Sinai. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 788.7}

5. It is better, because the promises upon which it is founded are better. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 788.8}

6. Yet it will be seen by comparing the terms of the new with those of the old, that the end contemplated by each is the same. The old said, “If ye will obey My voice;” the new says, “I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts.” Each has reference to the law of God. Both have holiness, and all the rewards of holiness, as the object. In the covenant at Sinai it was said to Israel, “Ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” Exodus 19:6. That is just what God’s own people really are, “a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people.” 1 Peter 2:5, 9. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 788.9}

But the promises of that covenant at Sinai were never realised, and for the very reason that they were faulty. The promises of that covenant all depended upon the people. They said, “All that the Lord hath spoken, we will do.” Exodus 19:8; 24:7. They promised to keep His commandments, although they had already demonstrated their inability to do anything themselves. Their promises to keep the law, like the law itself, were “weak through the flesh.” Romans 8:3. The strength of that covenant was therefore only the strength of the law, and that is death. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 788.10}

**WHY THE COVENANT AT SINAI?**

Why, then, was that covenant made?-For the very same reason that the law was spoken from Sinai; “because of transgression.” The Lord says it was “because they continued not in My covenant.” They had lightly esteemed the “everlasting covenant” which God had made with Abraham, and therefore He made this one with them, as a witness against them. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 788.11}

That “everlasting covenant” with Abraham was a covenant of faith. It was everlasting, and therefore the giving of the law could not disannul it. It was confirmed by the oath of God, and therefore the law could not add anything to it. Because the law added nothing to that covenant, and yet was not against its promises, it follows that the law was contained in its promises. The covenant of God with Abraham assured to him and his seed the righteousness of the law by faith. Not by works, but by faith. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 788.12}

The covenant with Abraham was so ample in its scope that it embraced all nations, even “all the families of the earth.” It is that covenant, backed by the oath of God, by which we now have confidence and hope in coming to Jesus, in whom it was confirmed. It is by virtue of that covenant, and that alone, that any man receives the blessing of God, for the cross of Christ simply brings the blessing of Abraham upon us. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 788.13}

That covenant was wholly of faith, and that is why it assures salvation, since “by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.” The history of Abraham makes very emphatic the fact that salvation is wholly of God, and not by the power of man. “Power belongeth unto God” (Psalm 62:11); and the Gospel is “the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.” Romans 1:16. From the case of Abraham, as well as that of Isaac and of Jacob, we are made to know that only God Himself can fulfil the promises of God. They got nothing by their own wisdom or skill or power; everything was a gift from God. He led them, and He protected them. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 788.14}

This is the truth that had been made most prominent in the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt. God introduced Himself to them as “The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob” (Exodus 3:15); and He charged Moses to let them know that He was about to deliver them in fulfillment of His covenant with Abraham. God spake unto Moses, and said unto him:- {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 789.1}

“I am JEHOVAH; and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob as God Almighty, but by My name Jehovah I was not known to them. And I have also established My covenant with them, to give them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their sojournings, wherein they sojourned. And moreover I have heard the groanings of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage, and I have remembered My covenant. Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am Jehovah, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments; and I will take you to Me for a people, and I will be to you a God; and ye shall know that I am Jehovah your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning which I lifted up My hand to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage; I am Jehovah.” Exodus 6:2-8, R.V. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 789.2}

Read now again the words of God just before the making of the covenant at Sinai:- {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 789.3}

“Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagle’s wings, and brought you unto Myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine; and ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” Exodus 19:4-6. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 789.4}

Note how God dwelt upon the fact that He Himself had done all that had been done for them. He had delivered them from the Egyptians, and He had brought them to Himself. That was the thing which they were continually forgetting, as indicated by their murmurings. They had even gone so far as to question whether the Lord was among them or not; and their murmurings always indicated the thought that they themselves could manage things better than God could. God had brought them by the mountain pass to the Red Sea, and into the desert where there was no food nor drink, and had miraculously supplied their wants in every instance, to make them understand that they could live only by His word.” Deuteronomy 8:3. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 789.5}

The covenant which God made with Abraham was founded on faith and trust. “Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto Him for righteousness.” So when God, in fulfilment of that covenant, was delivering Israel from bondage, all His dealing with them was calculated to teach them trust in Him, so that they might in truth be the children of the covenant. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 789.6}

**THE LESSON OF TRUST**

Their response of Israel was self-confidence. Read the record of their distrust in God in Psalm cvi. He had proved them at the Red Sea, in the giving of the manna, and at the waters of Meribah. In every place they had failed to trust Him perfectly. Now he comes to prove them once more, in the giving of the law. As we have already learned, God never intended that men should try to get righteousness by the law, or that they should think such a thing possible. In the giving of the law, as shown by all the attendant circumstances, He designed that the children of Israel, and we also, should learn that the law is infinitely above the reach of all human effort, and to make it plain that, since the keeping of the commandments is essential to the salvation which He has promised, He Himself will fulfill the law in us. These are the words of God: “Hear, O My people, and I will testify unto thee; O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto Me, there shall no strange God be in thee, neither shalt thou worship any strange god.” Psalm 81:8, 9. “Incline your ear, and come unto Me; hear, and your soul shall live.” Isaiah 55:3. His word transforms the soul from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, even as it brought forth Lazarus from the tomb. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 789.7}

A careful reading of Exodus 19:1-6, will show that there is no intimation that another covenant was then to be made. Indeed, the evidence is to the contrary. The Lord referred to His covenant,-the covenant long before given to Abraham,-and exhorted them to keep it, and told what would be the result of their keeping it. The covenant with Abraham was, as we have seen, a covenant of faith, and they could keep it simply by keeping the faith. God did not ask them to enter into another covenant with Him, but only to accept His covenant of peace, which he had long before given to the fathers. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 789.8}

The proper response of the people therefore would have been, “Amen, even so, O Lord, let it be done unto us according to Thy will.” On the contrary they said, “All that the Lord hath spoken we will do;” and they repeated their promise, with additional emphasis, even after they had heard the law spoken. It was the same self-confidence that led their descendants to say to Christ, “What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?” Think of mortal men presuming to be able to do God’s work! Christ answered, “This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent.” Even so it was in the desert of Sinai, when the law was given and the covenant made. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 789.9}

Their assuming the responsibility of working the works of God, showed lack of appreciation of His greatness and holiness. It is only when men are ignorant of God’s righteousness, that they go about to establish their own righteousness, and refuse to submit themselves to the righteousness of God. See Romans 10:3. Their promises were good for nothing, because they had not the power to fulfill them. The covenant, therefore, which was based on those promises was utterly worthless, so far as giving them life was concerned. All that they could get from that covenant was just what they could get from themselves, and that was death. To trust in it was to make a covenant with death, and to be in agreement with the grave. Their entering into that covenant was a virtual notification to the Lord that they could get along very well without Him; that they were able to fulfill any promise He could make. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 789.10}

But God did not give them up, “for He said, Surely they are My people, children that will not lie; so He was their Saviour.” Isaiah 63:8. He knew that they were moved by impulse in making that promise, and that they did not realise what it meant. They had a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. He had brought them out of the land of Egypt, that He might teach them to know Him, and He did not become angry with them because they were so slow to learn the lesson. He had borne with Abraham when he thought that he could work out God’s plans, and He had been very patient with Jacob when he was so ignorant as to suppose that God’s promised inheritance could be gained by sharp bargains and fraud. So now He bore with their children’s ignorance and lack of faith, in order that He might afterwards bring them to the faith. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 789.11}

**THE DIVINE COMPASSION**

God meets men just where they are. He has “compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way.” Hebrews 5:2. He is always and everywhere seeking to draw all men to Himself, no matter how depraved they are; and therefore when He discerns even the faintest glimmer of a willingness or desire to serve Him, He at once nourishes it, making the most of it He can to lead the soul to greater love and more perfect knowledge. So although the children of Israel had failed in this supreme test of their trust in Him, He took advantage of their expressed willingness to serve Him, even though it was only in “their own weak way.” Because of their unbelief they could not have all that He wished them to have; but that which they did get through their lack of faith was a continual reminder of what they might have if they fully believed. Because of their ignorance of the greatness of His holiness, which ignorance was expressed by their promise to do the law, God proceeded, by the proclamation of the law, to show them the greatness of His righteousness, and the utter impossibility of their working it out. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 790.1}

**“War As a Religion” The Present Truth, 12, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

War As a Religion .-Recent discussions in Germany on militarism and duelling have called attention to the constant use which the world is making of the name of God and religion in defending militarism. The theory that God delights in war, and that He fights on the side of the heaviest battalions, has no doubt won more souls to the eternal death to which Satan desires to consign them, companions with himself in his own inevitable fate, than any other error which he has been able to instil into the mind of man. Yet, throughout all the world, in civilised and so-called Christian nations, with enthusiasm even greater than among barbarians, men go on planning to increase the number of Satan’s victims. Every now and then one hears of the cult of the Luciferians, the professors of Satanism. There can be no more complete Satanism than this military spirit which so possesses the world. Is there nothing that will waken mankind to the realisation of this? {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 790.2}

**“Escape for Thy Life” The Present Truth, 12, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

**ANCIENT BABYLON**

When the wrath of God was about to fall upon Babylon, the children of the captivity had this word of warning:- {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 791.1}

“My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the Lord. And lest your heart faint, and ye fear for the rumour that shall be heard in the land; a rumour shall both come one year, and after that in another year shall come a rumour, and violence in the land, ruler against ruler.” Jeremiah 1:45, 46. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 791.2}

**JERUSALEM**

When Jerusalem had filled the cup of its iniquity by preferring its own ways to God’s ways, and the destruction was about to fall upon it, the disciples of Jesus had this warning to escape:- {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 791.3}

“And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out.” Luke 21:20, 21. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 791.4}

**MODERN BABYLON**

The seventeenth of Revelation represents under the figure of a corrupt woman, that great religious system-“that great city”-“which reigneth over the kings of the earth” (Verse 18), plainly Rome, which from old time has been known as the city sitting on its seven hills. Verse 9. This system, together with off-shoots from it, partaking of the same spirit-represented in the symbol as the mother and her daughters-is described in the next chapter as the spiritual Babylon, which has made all nations drunken, and filled the world with evil. Rome is the true inheritor of the ancient religion of old Chaldean Babylon, and the same old principles are to this day corrupting religious life. As the day draws near when upon Rome and her corrupt daughters will fall the destruction of the last day, God’s warning that again is:- {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 791.5}

“Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues plates. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.” Revelation 18:4, 5. God faithfully sends the warning every time His judgments are about to fall in order that all who will believe Him may escape. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 791.6}

**“Items of Interest” The Present Truth, 12, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

-At least ?144,000,000 worth of British property is always on the sea. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 798.1}

-Female prisoners, by way of experiment, are to be taught the art of making Oriental rugs and mate. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 798.2}

-Rice has been successfully grown in the Botanical Gardens, Regent’s Park, this past summer. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 798.3}

-A proposition to open the public library of Inverness on Sundays, has been defeated by only three votes. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 798.4}

-Japan is now, in population, the fifth power in the world. In numbers it exceeds Great Britain and Ireland by 7,100,000. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 798.5}

-Siberia is to have a new system of courts, and the old police government is to be abolished. It is expected that this will be a great reform. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 798.6}

-The opening of the door of a warm room in Lapland during the winter is immediately followed by a miniature snowstorm in the room, the condensed moisture falling in flakes. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 798.7}

-Japan is developing commercially. New lines of steamers to carry passengers and freight to and from America, Australia and Russia have been started with monthly sailings. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 798.8}

-Nearly four-fifths of the submarine cables of the world are in the hands of British companies, who own a length of more than 150,000 miles of cable, laid at a cost of over ?80,600,000. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 798.9}

-Safes, which outwardly exactly resemble iron ones, but really made of thin boards, are now supplied by various firms, and are sold to people starting in business who want to make a big show. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 798.10}

-The rinderpest, so destructive to the cattle of South Africa, threatens to spread to other countries. The bubonic plague, assisted by the famine, is also becoming more and more prevalent in India. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 798.11}

-It is said that the number of men throughout the civilised world who are capable of bearing arms, according to the physical rules fixed by the different governments for their soldiers, is one-fourth of the total population. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 798.12}

-India produces two crops of wheat in a year, one harvested in the spring and the other in the autumn. The autumn crop is sown in summer, but the spring crop is sown in the winter. The autumn crop in the present famine area has practically failed already, and unless rain falls during the next two months the spring crop will fail also. Of the vast population of India, numbering 300,000,000, 80 per cent. belong to the agricultural classes. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 798.13}

-The Lancashire Asylums Board have sanctioned the expenditure of 1,500 upon a new Roman Catholic Chapel for Rainhill Asylum, with the approval of the Lunacy Commissioners. The opponents of the scheme urged that Roman Catholics might hold service in a room devoted to other purposes as well; but Catholic members maintained that the exigencies of the Confessional and the Real Presence rendered a separate chapel absolutely necessary. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 798.14}

**“Back Page” The Present Truth, 12, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

Both Catholic and Protestant papers credit the government with the intention of devoting a million sterling to the endowment of the Catholic University in Ireland. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 800.1}

Several masters of Voluntary Schools in the East-end last week gave effect to their condition that such schools should be exempt from taxation by refusing to pay rates. Summonses were issued. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 800.2}

The annual report of the Pobiedonostseff, procurator of the Russian Synod, just published, recommends a curtailment of liberties granted to some unorthodox bodies, and suggests work for the police and gendarmes in bringing wanderers back to the Greek Church. Yet the procurator protests, as strongly as any advocate of religious legislation in the West, that he is against religious persecution, and only enforces civil laws for the good of society. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 800.3}

At an inquest over the body of a man whose death was caused by drunkenness, a coroner took occasion the other day to remark that he was well acquainted with the late Sir B. W. Richardson, and “felt that he had shortened his days by abstinence.” Inasmuch as Dr. Richardson had nearly completed threescore and ten years, and had lived an unusually busy and useful life, it is difficult to see how he lost much through his adherence to strict temperance principles. Certainly the coroner chose the most inopportune time and subject for preaching a sermon against total abstinence. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 800.4}

At a Nonconformist council last week, Dr. Parker pointed out the fatal inconsistency of Nonconformists who object to the Establishment, and who yet insist upon having religious teaching compulsory in State schools. Churchmen are consistent with their own principles, but both parties fail to see that the Christian religion can never be made a branch of politics. “If the national will has declared that religious education must be taught in State schools at the expense of the State, then,” said Dr. Parker truly, “I declare that the national will is wrong.” {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 800.5}

Wherever there is human nature there is caste, which is always a wicked thing, whether in India, Europe, or America, but the Indian caste system has some points of superiority over the western system, as witnessed by the following from a recently published book on “Hindu Castes and Sects,” written by a Hindu Brahman and President of the College of Pundits at Nadiya:- {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 800.6}

Of the several unclean castes the most important are those connected with the manufacture and sale of spiritous liquors.... All these occupy a very low position in the Hindu caste system, and although a great many of them have been in recent times become very wealthy through the encouragement given to the liquor traffic for fiscal purposes, yet their status has not improved materially. They have been, for more than half a century, struggling hard to be recognised as a clean caste. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 800.7}

The Russian Government has lately published a book dealing with the various sects in Russia outside the Greek Church. Seventh-day Adventists are given space, with an account of their teaching and work. It was extensively circulated at the recent exposition held in Novgorod, and our friends have already heard of one man who had been led to accept the Sabbath and other truths by reading the book. One of our Russian workers suggests that it might be well to circulate the book, as with the rigid press censorship the problem of missionary literature in Russia is a serious one. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 800.8}

Some may have thought that the settlement of the Manitoba school question, announced a little time ago, showed that there was really a possibility of affecting a compromise on religious education question. But now the whole controversy is reopened, and the Catholic hierarchy in Canada declares the “settlement intolerable.” {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 800.9}

**“To Make Him King” The Present Truth, 12, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

To Make Him King .-When the Jews sought to take Jesus by force and make Him King, He evaded them. His kingdom was not of this world, and their momentary zeal to give Him political power sprang from their own corrupt and selfish interests. As He was true to the principles of His kingdom and preached the Gospel of loyalty to God, they ended by crucifying Him. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 800.10}

**“The Same Thing” The Present Truth, 12, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Same Thing .-The great Christian Endeavour Society, which, from its rise a few years ago in America, has spread into nearly all nations, is becoming possessed of the idea that it is the Christian’s business to go into politics and thus make Christ the King of nations. The key-note now of the movement in America, representing a confederation of twenty-five denominations, is “Christian citizenship,” and they declare, {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 800.11}

We have a right to make and enforce human statutes that call for the observance of the laws of God. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 800.12}

The only possible end of any attempt by men to enforce God’s law is the crucifixion of Christ afresh. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 800.13}

**“Above God” The Present Truth, 12, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

Above God .-God’s law is spiritual, and so far is it above human strength that not only can no man be forced to keep it, but no man desiring to keep it can do so of himself. Only by receiving God Himself into the heart, by faith, to will and to do, can any man have the righteousness of the law fulfilled in him. And God Himself forces no one to be righteous against his will. So that this proposition, seriously made, to enact civil statutes to force men to keep God’s law (as interpreted by men) is not only an attempt to usurp the place of God, but is an effort to exalt man above God. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 800.14}

**“The Very Image of the Papacy” The Present Truth, 12, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Very Image of the Papacy .-The exaltation of the human above God is what made the Papacy, and all the persecutions of the Papacy were but attempts to enforce what the “clergy” declared to be the will of God. And it was accomplished by the church securing control of political power. And wherever this idea of forcing men to regard religion has obtained possession of men’s minds the result has been the same. Catholics or Protestants, they have only set up their own perverse wills, and only evil has followed. Priest or presbyter, it has mattered not a whit. “We will force respect for the Sabbath” says these zealous workers, and thus they think “the Government will become in fact as well as in name, a Christian government.” The spirit is spreading into all countries. By making the Sunday the test and mark of the authority which they assume they are fulfilling the prophecy which shows that the Protestant world will make a very likeness or image of the papal beast of the Revelation 8:11-17. It is against this exaltation of the Papacy and against receiving this mark of apostasy that the final proclamation of the “everlasting Gospel” warns all the world. Revelation 14:6-12. {PTUK December 10, 1896, p. 800.15}

**“The Turkish-Armenian Question” The Present Truth, 12, 51.**

E. J. Waggoner

**A CONSIDERATION OF SOME NEGLECTED TRUTHS**

For a long time, especially for the last eighteen months, the attention of the whole civilised world has been directed to the events taking place in Turkey. The Armenian massacres have been discussed in doubtless every pulpit in Christendom, and the papers, both secular and religious, have overflowed with accounts, comments, and suggestions. Indeed, one expects to see in his daily paper a column devoted to the situation in Turkey or to the relation of the Powers to it, just as regularly as to the state of the market. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 801.1}

It is therefore not necessary in this place to devote any space to the detailing of the outbreaks and massacres. No neglect has been shown in keeping them before the public in all their awful enormity; no details have been omitted, that would tend to excite the horror of the reader or hearer. While we do not repeat the reports of these massacres, we shall, for the purpose of our present study, assume that they are all true, both as to the numbers of Armenians slain, and as to the cruelties perpetrated. It might be well, however, to remember that in these reports we have the testimony from only one side,-that of the Armenians and those who are prejudiced against the Turks,-yet we will not now stop to question their truthfulness; let each one think that the outrages are as fearful as his imagination has pictured them. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 801.2}

**A STILL MORE TERRIBLE THING**

The taking of human life under any circumstances is an awful thing. To read of men being shot and stabbed, of human bodies mangled and bleeding in the streets, or kicked to one side as though they were dogs, is horrible; yet no description can equal the reality. So we say that people do well to shudder as they read of wholesale slaughter. But fearful as the massacres in Turkey may have been, there is something to which we do not see anybody’s attention specially called, which is still more shocking, so much more shocking that there can be no comparison. What is that thing?-it is the almost universal cry for vengeance, the demand for war,-for more killing,-that has issued and is still issuing from the lips and pens of professed followers and ministers of Christ. We do not wish to call attention to any individual, but only to the thing, and therefore we shall not give the names of those whose utterances we quote. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 801.3}

One man, who shows his strong religious sentiments by the statement, “We want a leader filled with the Holy Ghost, whose only fear is to displease God,” writes thus to a leading religious journal:- {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 801.4}

Sir, I am the father of a family, but my sons and I are only waiting the call to go out. In God’s name let us raise an army of volunteers, and wipe out the awful stain upon our fair island home of accomplices in crime, and sweep the old murderer and all his tribe into the sea. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 801.5}

Another person, a woman, a regular correspondent of the same religious paper, quotes the story of two English captains who received some Armenian refugees on board their ships in the Bosphorus, and then when the Turks demanded the refugees, hoisted the British flag, upon which the Turks went away. Then she says:- {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 801.6}

How fervently one wishes for a moment that they had fired upon our flag! It would have been the signal for instant war! {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 801.7}

**GROSS PERVERSION OF THE GOSPEL**

We have before us a report of a great representative meeting of Wesleyan Methodists, that was held in the historic City Road Chapel a few weeks ago. The writer says that, it was a meeting that showed, above all things, in how large a degree the best conscience of the people is permeated with the idea that the ethical principles of the Sermon on the Mount are applicable in all their simplicity even to the complex problems of international relations, and then follow these words:- {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 801.8}

The immediate outcome was a resolution assuring Her Majesty’s Government of united and vigorous support in any steps it may take to bring to a speedy end these disgraceful and unparalleled atrocities. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 801.9}

That by this resolution was meant support even in the event of war, is clearly shown by what preceded. One speaker said that “if necessary, England must stand alone in order to bring to an end this chapter of Eastern misrule.” This, as another truly said, would doubtless “provoke a European war,” yet even this the reverend gentlemen assembled were ready to accept, for still another said, “With Russia or without her, with the Concert of Europe or without it, we can, we must, we will, deliver the Armenians.” {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 802.1}

Remember now that to “deliver the Armenians” means war. If one Power should undertake it alone, without the concurrence of the other Powers, it would result in a general war of all the Powers ranged against one another according to their several interests; if there were agreement, then the war would be against the Turks alone; but in any case there would be war. Remember also that this war is just what ministers of the Gospel were and are still pleading for; and remember also the statement that the meeting showed “in how large a degree the best conscience of the people is permeated with the idea that the ethical principles of the Sermon on the Mount are applicable in all their simplicity to the complex problems of international relations,” and it will be seen how greatly men have allowed their passions to cloud their perception of the simplicity of the Gospel as set forth in the Sermon on the Mount. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 802.2}

Jesus said, in the Sermon on the Mount, “Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you, that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.” And further, “I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.” Matthew 5:38, 39, 44, 45. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 802.3}

That is all that is in the Sermon on the Mount that is especially applicable to this question, yet so far have professed Christians lost sight of its principles, that they can complacently cite their clamours for bloodshed and revenge as being an illustration of those principles. Indeed, it is from religious teachers and the religious press that the demand for vengeance principally comes, because they regard the case as one of religious persecution and therefore as especially concerning them. Now let the candid reader pause and think seriously, and say if such a perversion of the Gospel is not the most fearfully deplorable thing that could possibly happen. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 802.4}

The killing of a few thousands of people by men who do not profess to be Christians, is horrible enough; but more horribly wicked still is it when professors and ministers of the Gospel everywhere fill the minds of the people with the idea that war and vengeance are in harmony with and manifestations of the fundamental principles of Christianity. Such teaching only serves to nourish and glorify the natural fierceness which the Bible says will be characteristic of the last days; and with the people become fully imbued with it, there will be needed only a spark to set the whole world ablaze with the fire of hell. When the name of Christ, the Prince of Peace, is used as a war cry, where shall we look for peace on earth? {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 802.5}

**THE VENGEFUL SPIRIT**

It seems as though Christendom were becoming intoxicated with the spirit of vengeance, so that the most peaceably inclined men have lost their senses. One religious paper reprints some floating newspaper stories derogatory to the character of Turks in general, and then exclaims editorially,- {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 802.6}

Ought such a nation to be tolerated for a moment on the face of the earth? {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 802.7}

and that but expresses the general sentiment among preachers and people. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 802.8}

Just analyse this: “Ought such a nation to be tolerated for a moment on the face of the earth?” is the same as, “Ought such people to be tolerated for a moment on the face of the earth?” and that includes thousands of individuals, and of each of whom it is virtually said, “Ought such a person to be tolerated for a moment on the face of the earth?” That is to say, the spirit of intolerance is already so firmly rooted in the hearts of professed Christians, that they do not wish to tolerate for a moment the existence of those whom they, taking the throne of judgment, have decided to be unfit to live. What is that but charging God with laxness in the discharge of His duty, because He suffers wicked men to live? {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 802.9}

How different from the Spirit of Christ. When He was rejected by the Samaritans, and two disciples wished to command fire to come down and consume the inhospitable people, He rebuked them, saying, “Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.” Luke 9:51-56. The Spirit of desiring to be the instruments of God’s vengeance has always been more prominent than the desire to be instruments of His mercy, and when it is once cherished it inevitably results in getting ahead of the Lord, and being both judge and executioner. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 802.10}

**THE TRUE CHRISTIAN SPIRIT**

But we have a still stronger rebuke of this bitter, warlike spirit. When Jesus had been betrayed into the hands of His enemies, and a mob of men came to seize Him and put Him to death, Peter drew a sword in His defence. The blow just missed the head of one of the gang of murderers, and cut off his ear. “Then Jesus said to him, Put up again thy sword into his place; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” Matthew 26:51, 52. And then, as an evidence that He came not to take life but to save it, Jesus healed His wounded enemy. Luke 22:50, 51. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 802.11}

If there was ever a time when it was right to resist oppression and injustice, it was then. Jesus was innocent, as even His judges declared. Here was the worst kind of religious persecution. Every indignity, insult, and outrage was heaped upon Jesus, yet He opened not His mouth, and forbade His followers to fight in His defence. How then can any of His followers fight in defence of themselves, or even of their brethren who are persecuted? The disciple is not greater than his Lord. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 802.12}

Peter was well-meaning and sincere in his defence of the Lord, and so would we fain believe are those who now counsel drawing the sword in behalf of the Armenians. But Peter did not then know the spirit of the Gospel. He was not converted, and within a few hours after his impulsive defence he denied that he knew the Lord. His example is not one to be followed by disciples of Christ. When he became converted, he learned to know the Lord, and then he wrote:- {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 802.13}

“If, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps; who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously.” 1 Peter 2:20-23. Christians are called to follow Christ’s example, and to suffer unjustly, without complaining, much less resisting; yet all over the world professed Christians are denying this calling. Why is it?-It is because a spirit, not from the Lord, is seeking to drive them to destruction, for Jesus said, “All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” If Satan can only succeed in filling Christians with such zeal for any cause whatever, and no matter how worthy, that they will fight for it, He knows that their destruction is sure. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 802.14}

**THE WICKED, DEVASTATING SWORD**

Mark the word “all.” There is no exception. “All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” One of our poets has pleaded that {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 803.1}

The just, the holy, the benignant sword might be drawn in behalf of the Armenians, and professed Christians have applauded the sentiment; but the sword is always unjust, unholy, and devastating. It makes no difference who handles it. The sword vigorously wielded by the hands of professed Christians will work as much havoc and destruction as in the hands of infidels, as history abundantly proves, and therefore it is just as cruel and unholy. The fact that a man calls himself a Christian, does not make it any more a righteous deed for him to cleave another man’s head with the sword, than it would be if a Turk did the same thing. How can anybody think that that which is wicked on the part of a Mohammedan is righteous on the part of a Christian? Is it so that Christians have a monopoly of crime in this world? and that no one but Christians can murder their fellow-beings with impunity? Does the reputation that a man has determine the character of the deed he commits? If a man that is known to be a good man commits a murder, does that make the murder a righteous act? and is murder sinful only when perpetrated by men of previous bad reputation? That is the theory upon which is based the outcry against slaughter by the Turks, and the demand for the slaughter of the Turks. But it is a horrible doctrine. No; “he that doeth righteousness is righteous,” and “every one that committeth sin is the bondservant of sin.” When professed Christians do the deeds, and even overpass the deeds of the heathen, they nullify their profession, and place themselves in the ranks of the heathen. They are then worse than the heathen, because their high profession makes the insolence of their evil deeds the greater. Oh, the pity of the thing, that such a spirit should be consecrated by the name of Christianity! {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 803.2}

**WHO MAKES THEM TO DIFFER?**

The prevailing idea seems to be that it is far worse to kill Christians than to kill non-Christians. Thus there is a great outcry when Armenians are killed, and on the contrary rejoicing when Turks are killed. Who has ever heard any sorrow expressed for the thousands of Turks who were butchered in the crusades? A religious paper that is loud in its outcry against Turks who kill, publishes without protest as a matter of simple history, the following:- {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 803.3}

The founder of the reigning House of Montenegro was Daniel Petrovitch. He was elected Metropolitan in 1696, uniting in himself both the temporal and spiritual powers. On Christmas night, 1702, he cut to pieces all the Turks he could find in his dominions. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 803.4}

It is doubtful if there would be much if any indigation anywhere in Christendom if the Armenians should now slaughter the Turks in a similar manner. Indeed, the comments that followed the attack upon the Ottoman Bank furnish a case in point. At first it was thought to be a master stroke on the part of the Armenians; but afterwards, when the theory was circulated that the affair was planned by the Turks, then it was denounced as a dastardly outrage. It is on the same principle that when white men with machine guns kill several thousand blacks, it is a brilliant victory, and when the blacks retaliate upon a few dozen white that they succeed in overpowering, it is a cruel massacre. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 803.5}

A well-known prelate has expressed regret that the Spirit of the Crusades has been allowed to die out to the extent that it has, yet he can scarcely be ignorant of the fact that in those Crusades Mohammedans were butchered without mercy, simply because they were Mohammedans. The following brief extract describing the entry of the “Christians” into Jerusalem, amply shows the spirit and work of the Crusades:- {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 803.6}

The Saracens gave way before them. They retreated through the streets, fighting at intervals until they were driven into the precincts of the mosque of Omar. Blood flowed in the gutters, and horrid heaps of the dead lay piled at every corner. None were sparred by the frenzied Christians, who saw in the gore of the infidels the white way of redemption. Ten thousand dead, scattered through the city, gave token of the merciless spirit of the men of the West. Another ten thousand were heaped in the reeking courts of the great mosque on Mount Moriah. “God wills it,” said the pilgrims.... The Spirit of the massacre is well illustrated in a letter which the Christian princes sent to the Pope. The devout writers say: “If you wish to know what we did to the enemies we found in the city, learn that in the portico of Solomon and in the temple our horses walked up to the knees in the impure blood of the Saracens.” {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 803.7}

The Crusaders are applauded, while the Turks, who have not equalled them in ferocity, are execrated. Why this difference? {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 803.8}

In the Philippine Islands the Spaniards are at this very time slaughtering their Mohammedan subjects by the hundreds, showing no mercy to prisoners, but perpetrating the grossest cruelties. Yet there is no demand for the wiping out of the Spanish nation. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 803.9}

At the same time that the troubles were taking place in Turkey, English soldiers in Africa, under the direction of the Government, were slaughtering African natives. The white man’s machine guns mowed down the comparatively unarmed blacks making “a mere jujube of black humanity.” When the natives fled and took refuge in caves, these were blown up with dynamite; men, women, and children, torn and mangled, were thus buried, both dead and alive in one common grave. These reports come not from the victims, but from the victors; yet we hear of no meetings called to protest, nor any claims that English people are too wicked to be allowed to live, as indeed they are not. The same course has been pursued with the Indians in America, until now there are but few left. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 803.10}

We do not cite these things as accusations, but simply for the purpose of asking why it is so much worse for Turks to kill people than it is for English and Americans; why that which is denounced as an outrage when done by Mohammedans is a thing for applause when done by professed Christians. Truly, the times are sadly out of joint. Why is it so much worse for Mohammedans to kill Christians than for “Christians” to kill Mohammedans? Can anybody tell. Is it worse to kill a Christian, who has hope in his death, then to cut short the probation of one who does not know the Lord? Think of the awful responsibility men take upon themselves when they set themselves not merely to execute God’s judgment on the ungodly, but to anticipate Him, and to send them into eternity while He is waiting for them to repent. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 803.11}

**A MISTAKEN IDEA**

Thus far, in order that the case might stand in the strongest possible light, we have taken it for granted that the trouble in Turkey is simply religious persecution. The prevailing sentiment is thus expressed:- {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 804.1}

The recent atrocities are an exhibition of Moslem fanaticism and hatred of Christians, which the Powers strangely permit. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 804.2}

Now anybody who will take the trouble to think calmly and seriously, can satisfy himself that this is not at all the case. One simple fact alone is sufficient evidence. The Greek Church is just as much Christian as is the Armenian, yet it is a well-known fact that in all the troubles in Turkey, the Greeks have not suffered. In the midst of the greatest excitement in Constantinople, if a man were arrested, or were in danger of death, he would secure his instant release by showing that he was a Greek. If the Turks were persecuting Christians, why should they be so careful not to molest the Greeks? {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 804.3}

Again, there are many Roman Catholics in Turkey, yet there has been no proceeding against them. We mention these three bodies-Armenians, Greeks, and Roman Catholics-together, because they are very similar. While the Armenian Church is nominally Christian, it is a well-known fact that it is most intolerant of Protestants, as much so as is the Roman Catholic. Protestant work in territory exclusively Armenian is attended with as much difficulty as in Spain. That is no reason why they should be killed, or why those who are suffering should not be assisted; but it may help some who assist the needy to do so on the simple ground that they are needy mortals, and not under the mistaken notion that they are suffering for conscience sake. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 804.4}

In September last, just after the last outbreak, the writer witnessed a baptismal scene at Constantinople. It was at a time when the Turkish soldiers were patrolling the streets night and day; one could not turn a corner without seeing a squad of them. In the open day, without asking permission of anybody, a company of Christians went through the streets to the sea, to witness the immersion of some believers. The place of baptism was about midway between the Mohammedan mosques, and within bowshot of each. About half of the company were Armenians, the rest Greeks, and the administrator of the rite was an Armenian. Such a company walking together very naturally attracted a little attention, and a policeman asked what it meant. Upon being told, he said that was all right, and paid no more attention. At the sea there were Turks standing near, witnessing the baptism, and yet there was not so much as a disrespectful or irreverent word or gesture. There could not have been better decorum in any city in the world. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 804.5}

It might be well to add that the body represented on that occasion are not revolutionists, and are known to have no connection whatever with politics, but are content with being simply Christians. This is why they have had no difficulty. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 804.6}

Another instance will show that the Turkish opposition is against those who are plotting insurrection, and not against those who are teaching the Gospel. A young man, an Armenian residing in Scutari, was in Stamboul, and not being known to the police there, was arrested as a possible revolutionist. He told the police that he was a Sabbatarian, and they brought him to the house where the Sabbatarians were known to be assembled holding religious services, to see if it were so. When they were assured that he spoke the truth, he was released. But that was not all. The young men engaged the policeman in religious conversation, and the writer twice passed the door of the room where they were, and saw that Mohammedan Turkish policeman sitting on a divan with the Christian Armenian, each with a Bible in his hand, reading. The thought would not be repressed, that if all who profess to be Christians had used the sword of the Spirit instead of the carnal weapon in their dealings with the Turks, there might be a different story to tell. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 804.7}

**IS THE GOSPEL FOR THE TURKS?**

It is said, as proof that the Turks are animated solely by hatred of Christians, that people have been promised their lives on condition that they would turn Mohammedan, and give up the name Christian. That is very probably true. When revolution and anarchy are upheld and applauded throughout Christendom, what wonder is it if the Turks should, to a certain extent at least, associate Christianity and anarchy together? When to be a “Christian” is considered, and with good reason, synonymous with being an enemy of the Turks and the Turkish Government, the repression of revolution would very naturally be considered as simply the repression of too active Christianity. In such case it could easily be that real Christians, who hold the name as something more than a national sign, might suffer because they would not give up their faith, the Mohammedans not being able to distinguish between them and those who use the name as a cover for anarchy. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 804.8}

In prophetic vision the Apostle John saw “a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues,” standing before the throne of God, clothed with white robes, and bearing palms of victory over sin and Satan. Revelation 7:9. That is positive evidence that there will be Turks in heaven. Yet one would not gather from reading the religious press, that there was any possibility of salvation for a Turk. It may be said that the Turks are bitterly prejudiced against Christianity. That is true, and who could expect it to be otherwise? Christianity is to them embodied in the boasted “Christian nations” of Europe, and none of these have ever done anything to recommend the name. But that is not all. Those religious bodies, professing to be Christian, of which the Turks have most knowledge, are the Greek and Armenian churches, and in one important particular the Mohammedan has good reason to believe that his religion is superior to theirs; for he sees the members of those bodies bowing down to and adoring images and pictures, while the Mohammedan abominates the worship of idols. But even this is not the worst. From the time of the Crusades professed Christians as a rule have regarded the Turks with lofty contempt, as beings to be execrated and driven off; now, all Christendom is ringing with unchristian cries for vengeance upon the Turks, and even their utter extermination. Can it be wondered at that the Turks are not drawn towards Christianity, or that they are suspicious of foreigners? But when the just Judge of all the earth punishes the Turks for their misdeeds, who dare say that none of their blood will be upon the garments of those who bear the name of Christian? We appeal to individual Christians to clear themselves, by being Christlike in their words and acts, from all responsibility for Turkish indifference to Christianity. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 804.9}

**THE GREAT DECEPTION**

There is a cause for this present cry against the Turks. That it is not caused by the Spirit of Christ, needs no argument. What spirit it is that is even now working, may be seen by remembering what it is desired to do with the Turks. The least thing that is demanded, is that they be driven from Europe. Such atrocities, it is said, ought not to be allowed on European soil. But will they be any better on Asiatic soil?-Certainly not. Then what would necessarily be the next step after driving them from Europe-manifestly, to drive them from Asia, that is, from the earth, so far at least as their existence as a nation is concerned. This is even now demanded. Their overthrow will be the last act in the scheme to place the world under the dominion of so-called Christian powers, thus to fulfil the dreams of a temporal millennium, in which so many have indulged. But each one of these “Christian Powers” will wish to have the supremacy, and so the armies of all will be assembled in Palestine, the centre of the Sultan’s Asiatic dominion,-when the last struggle takes place. That gathering is thus described in prophecy: {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 804.10}

“And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty... And he [they] gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.” Revelation 16:13-16. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 805.1}

Here we are plainly told what spirit brings the kings of the earth together at that place. That deception we see working even now; for that Christendom is being deceived is painfully evident. If men were not already grossly deceived, how could they in the name of Christ counsel war? How could they so misrepresent true Christianity before the world as to claim that the blood even of martyrs demands revenge by the sword? Is it not a terrible deception that is even now closing in upon the world? What an awful thought, that every man, be he minister of the Gospel or not, who is upbraiding the powers for naught concerning the Turks, is simply an unconscious agent of Satan to gather the kings of earth to that great battle which is to result in the ruin of all. God grant that many who have thoughtlessly been led away by a popular clamour, may recover themselves from the snare of the devil before it is too late, and show to the world, including the Turks, that Christianity means to be like Christ. We have full faith that this prayer will be answered. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 805.2}

**“The Promises to Israel. The Veil and the Shadow” The Present Truth, 12, 51.**

E. J. Waggoner

“But, and if our Gospel is veiled, it is veiled in them that are perishing; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not dawn upon them.” 2 Corinthians 4:3, 4, R.V. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 805.3}

“And it came to pass, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses’ hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with Him.” (Better, as in the margin of the Revision, “Because he talked with Him.”) Exodus 34:29. Because Moses talked with God, his face shone even after he had left God’s immediate presence. “And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him. And Moses called unto them; and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him; and Moses talked with them. And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh; and he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with him in Mount Sinai. And till Moses had done speaking with them, he put a veil on his face. But when Moses went in before the Lord, to speak with Him, he took the veil off, until he came out. And he came out, and spake unto the children of Israel that which he was commanded. And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses’ face shone; and Moses put the veil upon his face again, until he went in to speak with Him.” Verses 30-35. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 805.4}

Unbelief blinds the mind. It acts as a veil, to shut out the light. It is only by faith that we understand, Moses had deep and abiding faith; therefore he “endured as seeing Him who is invisible.” He needed no veil over his face even when he was in the immediate presence of the glory of God. The veil which he put on his face when he came down to talk with the children of Israel, was solely on their account, because his face shone so that they could not look upon him. But when he went back to talk with the Lord, he took the veil off. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 805.5}

The veil over the face of Moses was a concession to the weakness of the people. If he had not put it on, then each of them would have been obliged to put a veil over his own face, in order to come near to listen to Moses. They were not able, as Moses was, to look upon the glory of the Lord with unveiled face. Practically, therefore, each one of them had a veil over his own face. The face of Moses was unveiled. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 805.6}

That veil over the face of the children of Israel represented the unbelief that was in their hearts. So the veil was really over their hearts. “Their minds were blinded;” and “even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart.” This is true not of the Jewish people alone, but of all who do not see Christ set forth in all the writings of Moses. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 805.7}

A veil interposed between people and the light, leaves them in the shadow. So when the children of Israel spread out the veil of unbelief between themselves and “the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ,” they naturally got only the shadow of it. They received only the shadow of the good things promised them, instead of the very substance. Let us note some of the shadows, as compared with the realities. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 806.1}

**SHADOW AND SUBSTANCE**

1. God had said, “If ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then...ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests.” But they never became a kingdom of priests. Only one tribe, the tribe of Levi, could have anything whatever to do with the sanctuary, and of that tribe only one family, that of Aaron, could be priests. It was certain death for any one not of the family of Aaron to presume to serve as priest in any way. Yet all who are really the children of God through faith in Christ Jesus, are “a royal priesthood,” even “an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 2:5. This was what God promised to the nation of the Jews, at Sinai; but they never attained to it, because they did not keep His covenant of faith, but trusted in their own strength. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 806.2}

2. Instead of being brought to the heavenly sanctuary which God’s hands established, and being planted in it, they had a worldly sanctuary made by man, and were not allowed to go into even that. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 806.3}

3. The throne of God, in the sanctuary above, is a living throne, self-moving, coming and going like a flash of lightning, in immediate response to the thought of the Spirit. Ezekiel 1. On the contrary, they had in the earthly sanctuary but a feeble representation of that throne in the shape of an ark of wood and gold, which had to be carried about on the shoulders of men. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 806.4}

4. The promise in the covenant with Abraham, which God’s people were to keep, was that the law should be put into the heart. The children of Israel got it on tables of stone. Instead of by faith receiving “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus,” (Romans 8:2), that is, upon “the living stone” in the midst of the throne of God (See 1 Peter 2:3, 4; Revelation 5:6), which would impart life to them, making them also living stones, they received the law only on cold, lifeless stones, which could give them nothing but death. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 806.5}

5. In short, instead of the ministration of the righteousness of God in Christ, they got only the ministration of death; for the very same thing which is a savour of life to them that believe, is a savour of death to them that do not believe. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 806.6}

But see the kindness and mercy of God even in this. He offered them the bright shining of His glorious Gospel, and they interposed a veil of unbelief, so that they could receive only the shadow. Yet that very shadow was an ever-present reminder of the substance. When a thick, passing cloud casts a shadow on the earth, we know, if we are not too dull to think, that it could not cast a shadow if it were not for the sun; so that even the cloud proclaims the presence of the sun. If therefore people nowadays, even professed Christians, were not as blind as the children of Israel ever were, they would be always rejoicing in the light of God’s countenance, since even a cloud always proves the light to be present, and faith always causes the cloud to disappear, or else sees in it the bow of promise. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 806.7}

**GOD’S WITNESS IN UNBELIEF**

It was better for the Jews to have the law even as a witness against them, than not to have it at all. It was a great advantage to them in every way, to have committed unto them the oracles of God. Romans 3:2. It is better to have the law present to upbraid us for our sins, and to point out the way of righteousness, than to be left entirely without it. So the Jews, even in their unbelief, had an advantage over the heathen, because the Jews had “the form of righteousness and of the truth in the law.” Romans 2:20. While that form could not save them, and only made their condemnation the greater if they rejected the instruction designed to be conveyed by it, yet it was an advantage in that it was a constant witness to them of God. God did not leave the heathen without witness, in that He spoke to them of Himself through the things that He had made, preaching the Gospel to them in creation; but the witness which He gave to the Jews, besides the other, was the very image of His own eternal realities. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 806.8}

And the very realities themselves were for His people. Only the veil of unbelief over their hearts kept them from having the substance of which they had the shadow; but “the veil is done away in Christ,” (2 Corinthians 3:14), and Christ was even then present with them. Whenever the heart shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Even the blindest could see that the sanctuary of the old covenant, and the ordinances of Divine service that were connected with it, were not the realities that God had sworn to give to Abraham and his seed. So they all might at once have turned to the Lord, even as individuals did throughout the whole history of Israel. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 806.9}

Moses talked with God with unveiled face. When the others “stood afar off,” “Moses drew near.” It is only by the blood of Christ that any can draw nigh. By the blood of Jesus we have boldness to enter even into the holiest, into the secret place of God. The fact that Moses did this shows his knowledge of the power of the precious blood and his confidence in it. But the blood that was able to give boldness and access to Moses, could have done the same to all the others, if they had believed as he did. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 806.10}

Do not forget that the presence of a shadow proves the present shining of the sun. If the glory of God’s righteousness had not been present in its fulness, the people of Israel could not have had even the shadow. And since it was unbelief that caused the shadow, faith would have brought them at once into the full sunlight, and they could have been “to the praise of the glory of His grace.” {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 806.11}

Moses saw the glory with unveiled face, and was transformed by it. So if we believe, “we all, with unveiled face, reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit.” 2 Corinthians 3:18. Even so it might have been with the children of Israel, if they had believed, for the Lord was never partial. That which Moses shared, all might have shared. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 806.12}

**“THAT WHICH WAS ABOLISHED”**

“Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” Romans 10:4. He “hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel;” (2 Timothy 1:10); and that Gospel was preached to Abraham, and to Israel in Egypt, and in the desert. But because of the unbelief of the people they “could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished.” 2 Corinthians 3:13. Because their faith did not lay hold on Christ, they got only the law as “the ministration of death,” (Verse 7), instead of “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.” {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 806.13}

People talk about “the Gospel age” and “the Gospel dispensation,” as though the Gospel were an afterthought on the part of God, or at the most something which God long delayed to give mankind. But the Scriptures teach us that “the Gospel dispensation” or “Gospel age” is from Eden lost to Eden restored. We know that “this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” Matthew 24:14. That is the end of it, but the beginning was at the fall of man. The Apostle Paul directs our attention to man in the beginning, crowned with glory and honour, and set over the works of God’s hands. Directing us to fix our gaze upon man in Eden, lord over all that he saw, the apostle continues, “But now we see not yet all things put under him.” Hebrews 2:8. Why not?-Because he fell, and lost the kingdom and the glory. But we still look at the place where we first saw man in the glory and power of innocence, and where we saw him sin and come short of the glory, and “we see Jesus.” Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost; and where should He seek except where it was lost? He came to save man from the fall, and so He necessarily went where man fell. Wherever sin abounds, there does grace much more abound. And so “the Gospel dispensation,” with the cross of Christ shedding the light of the glory of God into the darkness of sin, dates from the fall of Adam. Where the first Adam fell, there the second Adam rises, for there the cross is erected. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 806.14}

“Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead,” because the second man Adam is a quickening Spirit, (1 Corinthians 15:21, 45), being “the resurrection and the life.” Therefore in Christ death was abolished, and life and immortality were brought to light in the Gospel, the very day that Adam sinned. If it had not been so, Adam would have died that very day. Abraham and Sarah proved in their own bodies that Christ had abolished death, for they both experienced the power of the resurrection, rejoicing to see Christ’s day. Long before their day, Enoch’s translation without seeing death had proved that its power was broken; and his translation was due to his faith in Christ. Much more, then, was “the Gospel dispensation” in full glory as far down in the history of the world as Sinai. Whatever other dispensation than the Gospel dispensation any people have ever shared, has been solely because of their hardness and impenitent heart, which despised the riches of God’s goodness and forbearance and long-suffering, and treasured up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 807.1}

So right there at Sinai the ministration of death was done away in Christ. The law was “in the hand of a Mediator,” (Galatians 3:19), so that it was life to all who received it in Him. Death, which comes by sin, and the strength of which is the law, was abolished, and life put in its place to every one that believeth, no matter how many or how few they were. But let no one forget that as the Gospel was in full glory at Sinai, even so the law just as given at Sinai, is always present in the Gospel. If the law on the lifeless tables of stone was but a shadow, it was nevertheless an exact shadow, of the living law on the living stone, Christ Jesus. God would have all men know, wherever His voice is heard, that the righteousness which Christ’s obedience imparts to the believer is the righteousness that is described in the law spoken from Sinai. Not one letter can be altered. It is an exact photograph of the character of God in Christ. A photograph is but a shadow, it is true; but if the light is clear it is an exact representation of some substance. In this case the light was “the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God,” (2 Corinthians 4:4), so that we may know the ten commandments to be the literal and exact form of God’s righteousness. They describe to us just what the Holy Spirit will print in living letters of light upon the fleshy tables of our hearts if they are but sensitised by simple faith. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 807.2}

**“‘Put Not Your Trust in Princes’” The Present Truth, 12, 51.**

E. J. Waggoner

The injunction not to put one’s trust in princes is emphasised by the recent news from Russia. At the time of the coronation of the Czar bright prospects were held out to the betterment of the condition of those in Russia who were persecuted for conscience sake, but it seems that whatever the ideas of the Czar are, or might have been, the power behind the throne has no intention of making any change in Russian policy. A report says:- {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 807.3}

During the reign of Alexander III. the Old Believers were granted certain liberties which went to ameliorate their hard lot. These privileges, according to M. Pobiedonostseff, should be now repealed, and police and gendarmes should be authorised to see if no means are available for bringing back these erring sheep to the fold of the Church. One inevitably concludes, after reading this report to the Czar, that the Minister believes himself in accord with his imperial master, as he would hardly advocate a policy which he believed to be distasteful to him. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 807.4}

The grim irony of the sentence, “Police and gendarmes should be authorised to see if no means are available for bringing back the erring sheep to the fold of the Church,” is a sad commentary on those beautiful and tender Scriptural passages where Christ compared Himself to the shepherd, and His followers to the sheep which knew His voice. In Christ’s parable of the Good Shepherd He did not represent Himself as calling for a detachment of Roman soldiers to go out on the mountain with swords and spears to drive in the wandering lamb. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 807.5}

But Russia is not alone. Daily instances are not lacking, in every country, to show how far the accepted religious organisations of the world have departed from Christianity. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 807.6}

**“‘I Am’” The Present Truth, 12, 51.**

E. J. Waggoner

In the eighth chapter of John we have three distinct utterances of Jesus, in which He sets forth the fact of His oneness with Him who is “from everlasting to everlasting.” Speaking to the carping Jews, who blindly refused to understand Him, He said, “If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins.” The reader will notice that the word “He” is in italics, an indication that it was added by the translators. There is in the Greek no hint of it. Therefore since the translators inserted it, we can well omit it, taking the words of Jesus without the addition. Thus we have, “If ye believe not that I AM, ye shall die in your sins.” {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 807.7}

In verse 28 we have again the same edition of the word He. So we read, “When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I AM, and that I do nothing of Myself.” {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 807.8}

In verse 58 we have it clearly and plainly stated, “Before Abraham was, I AM.” {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 807.9}

In these texts we have the truth set forth that Jesus “through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God” (Hebrews 9:14), and that it is by a practical belief in His eternal nature that we are saved from dying in our sins. The power by which we are saved, is the power of a self-existent life. Christ is the One who was—His goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity. Micah 5:2, margin. He is the One who is—“He ever liveth.” And He is the One who is to come—“Behold, I come quickly.” {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 807.10}

“I AM—.” Fill out the blank with any good thing you please, and that is Christ, but yet only in part, for no one but Himself can fill it out. That blank indicates infinity and eternity. “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” “I am the root of the offspring of David, and the bright and Morning Star.” “I am the Good Shepherd.” “I am the Door,” “I am the resurrection and the life.” Yea, all we need, and more than we can ask or think, we find in Him; and it is His cross, His being lifted up from the earth, that makes us know these things. Therefore, “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 807.11}

**“Tea Drinking” The Present Truth, 12, 51.**

E. J. Waggoner

Some recent statistics of the tea trade show that the consumption of tea is increasing out of all proportion to the increase of population. It is becoming the popular beverage in countries not formerly using it to any great extent, and,- {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 814.1}

“In those where tea is already the popular drink-Great Britain, Russia, and Holland, and, over seas, our Colonies and the United States-it also grows continuously in favour, though, of course, there is not room for such a large relative increase. The total consumption of all countries from which returns are obtainable, exclusive of the East, shows a rise of twenty-three per cent. in the twelve years. In short, tea seems to be conquering the world: those who used not to drink it have begun to do so, and those who drank it before drink more than ever.” {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 814.2}

And another thing, too, is growing-and we constantly meet its expression in medical and scientific journals-and that is the conviction that the increase of nervous troubles is due in great part to the increased use of stimulants. Under the heading, “Terrors of Tea,” the St. James Gazette comments on this aspect of tea-drinking as follows:- {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 814.3}

“Nervous people, experience shows us, are, as a rule, extremely selfish. La femme nerveuse is the most inconsiderate specimen of her sex. Her nerves have become a species of fetish, which must be propitiated by the sacrifice of everybody’s comfort except her own. She considers every action, both of herself and the world at large, primarily from the point of view of the effect it will have on her nerves. If she happened to be omnipotent, she would no doubt at once stop the movement of the earth, for fear of its giving her a ‘turn.’ Her sentiment of pity for the misfortunes of others is entirely blunted by her horror of the sight of pain and the sound of woe. She exacts the utmost forbearance and sacrifice from others,-not for herself, but for her nerves,-and exempts herself from gratitude on the same grounds. She tends, in fact, to become completely soulless; accepting all devotion as her due, bitterly resenting any resistance to her claims, and substituting for all higher spiritual life an egotistical form of pessimism which is as delusive as it is difficult to combat. That she is not actively cruel is an accident; passively cruel she is continually, without remorse or thought; and it is probable that when provocation and opportunity offered themselves simultaneously, she would not stay her hand from direct cruelty. The nervous woman is a product of the nineteenth century, and, inferentially, of tea. She takes it to soothe her nerves, and it rather excites them; or else she takes it because she has acquired the habit, and the result is the same. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 814.4}

“Russian women are even more afflicted with ‘nerves’ than their English sisters. They are more inclined to fitful and violent excitements, more skilled in intrigue, more pessimistic, more selfish as a rule. Now it is worth noticing that they have known the use of tea much longer, that they drink a purer and stronger beverage, and that they indulge in it oftener than English women. The children take after their mothers, and in the men the characteristics become more pronounced and more brutal.” {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 814.5}

**“Items of Interest” The Present Truth, 12, 51.**

E. J. Waggoner

-Vital statistics show that persons born in the spring are usually of a more robust constitution than those who come into the world at other times in the year. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 814.6}

-Abyssinia is reported to have ceded to Russia a strip of coast next to the Italian colony. Thus Russian diplomacy wins another victory and gets a footing in Africa. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 814.7}

-At the four great markets of the Western United States, for several years, the number of beeves slaughtered annually has averaged more than three and one-half millions. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 814.8}

-The Czar has a bodyguard of fifteen Cossacks who accompany him nearly everywhere, and occasionally sot as detectives. They sometimes officiate as cooks, and very frequently insist upon “tasting” fresh bottles of wine three or four times p day, to be sure it is not poisoned. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 814.9}

-The Budget of the Congo State still shows a deficit. The State lost nearly a milllon francs last year. A Belgian traveller has lately visited the State and reports that the morals of the whites there are utterly bad. Women are bought and sold at very low figures, and the influence of “civilisation” is anything but good. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 814.10}

-When it was proposed in the London County Council to enlarge Haswell Asylum in order to accommodate the increasing number of lunatics a member suggested that the proper authority for maintaining imbeciles was the Government, inasmuch as lunacy was chiefly caused by alcohol, the sale of which brought s large revenue to the Treasury. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 814.11}

-An Archbishop of Canterbury has to pay out nearly ?900 in fees before he can be enthroned. The officials of the Board of Green Cloth, the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, the Clerk of Parliament, the Auditor of the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury, the Yeoman Usher of the Black Rod, and the doorkeepers of the House of Lords all profit by a vacancy in the Primacy. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 814.12}

-Great suffering is reported among the Matebeles. The stores and cattle of the natives were very largely destroyed during the recent war, and so many of the males were killed that many of the surviving families are perishing of starvation. Similar and more extensive distress exists in Armenia, where following the disorders of the past year or two, the cold winter is bringing misery and suffering upon destitute survivors. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 814.13}

-During the war between Japan and China Russia intervened in behalf of China, and compelled Japan to hand back Port Arthur and the surrounding country. Russia also loaned money to China. The price of this friendship is now made public, if reports are correct. China gives Russia practical control of Northern China. The railway through Manchuria is to be guarded by Russian troops, and Russia is to have a naval port at one end of the railway. Another branch of the railway is to run to Port Arthur, and this fortress is to be occupied by Russia in time of war. Thus Russia takes what Japan gave up, and the political balance in the East is entirely altered. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 814.14}

**“Back Page” The Present Truth, 12, 51.**

E. J. Waggoner

Speaking of the increasing frequency of earthquakes, Professor Milne says that some years ago Japan registered about 500 shocks per year, but in recent years as many as 1,000 a year have been experienced. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 816.1}

“I tell you,” said a non-thinker, who fancied himself a free-thinker, “the idea that there is a God has never come into my head.” “Ah! precisely like my dog. But there is this difference, he doesn’t go round howling about it.” {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 816.2}

It is announced that the army, as well as the navy, is to be materially increased. This is to keep pace with the increase which France and Germany are making “Thus militant Europe continues,” in the language of one newspaper, “to make ready for an inevitable, colossal conflict.” {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 816.3}

Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world; if My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews.” John 18:36. The kingdom of Christ is not a thing to be fought for. The force that takes the kingdom of heaven, is not the force of arms. But if a man will not fight for the greatest thing in the world, how can he fight for the minor things? If he will not fight for the kingdom of Christ, it is certain that he will not fight for any kingdom of man. Therefore the servant of Christ will not fight at all, under any consideration. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 816.4}

“Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” But the man who starts in the service of the Lord with his eyes on “these things” of a temporal nature, is not seeking first the kingdom of God and righteousness. The man who does not see “these things” receives them, and is content with what he has, whether he abounds or suffers need, while the man whose thought is upon the material things has no certainty of them, and fails of receiving the righteousness. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 816.5}

**“Papal Etiquette” The Present Truth, 12, 51.**

E. J. Waggoner

Papal Etiquette .-Some idea may be formed of the wonderful magic still exercised by the papacy over men’s minds, says the Chronicle, by considering the inconveniences to which crowned heads voluntarily submit in order to keep up the fiction of “the Prisoner of the Vatican.” Passing over the fact that such good Catholics as the Emperor of Austria and the King of Portugal are absolutely prohibited from setting foot in Rome, we may just note the conditions upon which King Alexander of Servia, a member of the Greek Communion, was permitted last week to call upon the Pope. The idea of a visit on his return from Naples, when he would no longer be King Humbert’s guest, could not be tolerated for a moment. It was intimated that he and his whole suite must be conveyed in mufti by the Court carriages to be Quirinal Hotel, declared for the occasion to be Servian territory. There the party had changed their civil garments for gala uniforms, and then proceed in hired carriages to the Vatican. After the visit his Majesty must await in uniform the call of Cardinal Rampolla, and then resuming his every-day clothes return to the Quirinal Palace and the royal vehicles. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 816.6}

**“The Gospel Gives” The Present Truth, 12, 51.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Gospel Gives .-It makes all the difference in the world how one looks at the Gospel. If one looks at it as taking away from us things that we have always prized because they are peculiar to us, it is hard; if we look at it as giving us the best possible things, it is easy. The one who says, “If I am a Christian, I shall have to give up” this or that thing, can see nothing but bondage in it; while the one who knows that if he accepts Christ he receives everything worth having, sees joy and gladness in the Christian life. The Gospel gives, instead of taking away. “God so loved the world, that He gave”-what?-“His only begotten Son,” “whom He hath appointed heir of all things.” John 3:16; Hebrews 1:2. Now “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” Romans 8:32. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 816.7}

All that the Lord asks us to give up is our own evil way, which we try to persuade ourselves is good enough, but which the Lord says is but “filthy rags.” But He offers us instead His own perfection. Imagine now a poor beggar with filthy garments that will scarcely hold together, saying to his companions, “I am invited to go to Mr.—’s house; but if I go I shall certainly have to give up all these clothes of mine.” “What! and go naked?” asks one. “Oh, no; he will give me a fine new suit.” “Well, then,” some sensible fellow would say, “you have stated the case wrong. What you ought to say is that if you go you will receive some good clothes, and instead of complaining, you ought to rejoice. Even so the one who knows the Lord will, instead of complaining that he must give up the filthy rags of his own misdeeds, say: “I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness.” Isaiah 61:10. “Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.” {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 816.8}

**“‘Christendom’ and Heathendom” The Present Truth, 12, 51.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Christendom” and Heathendom .-The Rev. Mark Guy Pearse, of the West London Mission, as thorough and loyal an Englishman as there is living, preached a sermon at St. James’s Hall, on “Temperance Sunday,” published in the Methodist Times of Dec. 10, in which he said:- {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 816.9}

All that England has done and is doing to advance the welfare of the nations is undone and worse than undone by the curse of strong drink. It hurts one indeed to think of it, but it is just the awful and terrible truth, that in spite of our Bible Societies and all our great Missionary Societies, the world would be better to-day if there were no England. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 816.10}

And the same is true of every other nation on earth, in proportion to its power and influence, the reason why may be seen from the next statement made by Mr. Pearse:- {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 816.11}

In India, it is said that for every native converted to Christianity, one hundred natives are made drunkards. When the natives see a drunken man they are accustomed to say, “He has left Mohammed and gone to Jesus.” “Now that Burmah has been annexed,” says a missionary, “it has become a place of cheap drink and great crimes.” {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 816.12}

It is awful to think that people are given such false ideas of Jesus and Christianity, and it all comes through that fiction expressed by the term “Christian nation,” which many real Christians thoughtlessly foster. If the truth had always been proclaimed, that Christianity is simply Christlikeness, that it is an individual affair and that all nations are, as nations, always heathen, and only heathen, much dishonour to the Christian name would have been saved. {PTUK December 17, 1896, p. 816.13}

December 24, 1896

**“The Lesson of History” The Present Truth, 12, 52.**

E. J. Waggoner

We do not say “a lesson from history,” but “the lesson of history;” for there is but one great lesson that history teaches, yet it is one that is rarely learned. For want of learning this one lesson, thousands study history in vain; while he who learns the simple, fundamental lesson in the beginning of his study will read to profit. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 817.1}

The reason why the lesson referred to is so almost universally overlooked, is that the records that are usually studied are so crowded with details that the mind becomes confused; history becomes to the student only a mass of occurrences, in which the underlying truth taught by history is lost. This melancholy result would be avoided if people began at the right place to study, taking the simplest history first, and afterwards that which is more complex. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 817.2}

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,” and the Bible is the book that teaches the fear of the Lord; therefore it is in the Bible that the beginning of wisdom is found. It is the simplest book in the world, as would naturally be expected of a book of beginnings. That it is really a book very easy to be understood is proved by the fact that it teaches the way to the kingdom of heaven, which can be entered only by children and those who become like children. See Matthew 18:3. It is manifest, therefore, that the Bible can be understood by children, and consequently must be an easy book. It is the first book that children should study. But the whole of the thing is found in the beginning, just as the entire tree exists in the germ; and so the Bible, which teaches the fear of the Lord, contains the sum of knowledge, and may be studied by the grey-haired sage as profitably as by the little child. Its treasure of wisdom is inexhaustible. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 817.3}

Now for the first lesson in history. Very fittingly it begins with the beginning of time. We will quote a page from it, that we may clearly see what is the simple, underlying truth taught by all history since the creation of the world. Here it is:- {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 818.1}

“This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created He him; and blessed them, and called their name Adam [man] in the day when they were created. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 818.2}

“And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in His own likeness, after His image; and called his name Seth. And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years; and he begat sons and daughters. And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died. And Seth lived an hundred and five years, and begat Enos. And Seth lived after he begat Enos eight hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters: and all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years; and he died.” Genesis 5:1-8. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 818.3}

Thus the record continues to the end of the chapter, of which we have quoted just one fourth; yet the chapter covers a period of more than fifteen hundred years. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 818.4}

What is the sum of history, as indicated by this record?-Simply this, that man lived a certain number of years, and then died. With this first historical record agree all that have been written since. The whole of history can be summed up in the words, They lived so long, and then they died. The one thing, therefore, that history teaches, is that a man’s life is but “a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.” Yet this is the thing that is seldom thought of in reading history. Histories written by man are so filled up with accounts of the incidentals,-the things that people did, the battles fought, the kingdoms established, the cities built, and the “glory” gained,-that unless one has begun the historical study of the primary book, that is, the Bible, he will lose the main point. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 818.5}

Secular history alone is sufficient, if one reads it thoughtfully, to show that it is utterly impossible for man to inherit or possess this earth. “For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others.” Notwithstanding this, “their inward thought is that their houses shall continue for ever; they call their lands after their own names.” “This their way is their folly; yet their posterity approve their sayings.” Psalm 49:10-13. Each generation imagines that it is an exception, and that its works will stand for ever. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 818.6}

**DULL STUDENTS**

People refuse to learn the lesson of history, even when it is spread out before their eyes. They contemplate the ruins of former greatness, and even while looking, think, “How superior we are to those who lived in ancient times; their empires all vanished, and their cities are in ruins, or utterly extinct.” But that is most short-sighted reasoning. A man might as well claim to have more vitality than Methuselah, because he himself is living, in the possession of full strength, while Methuselah, forsooth, is long since dead! Ah, but wait, my friend, and time will tell a different story. You will not have to wait one-tenth the length of Methuselah’s life, to learn your mistake. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 818.7}

So with the works of which men boast to-day. There are now no structures so massive and so strongly built as many of those of ancient days, that have been utterly demolished by time. Should time continue as much longer as it has already continued, nothing would remain of the glory of the nations that now inhabit the earth, and their names would be forgotten unless some few fragments of stone preserved them. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 818.8}

No; this earth is under a curse, and unsuited for man’s dwelling-place. He cannot live here. Do what he will to establish himself here, he is swept away before he can fairly get a foothold. The princes of the earth are brought to nothing, and the judges of the earth are as vanity. “Yea, scarce are they planted, scarce are they sown, scarce hath their stock taken root in the earth, when he bloweth upon them, and they wither, and the whirlwind taketh them away as stubble.” Isaiah 40:24, R.V., margin. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 818.9}

In spite of this truth, which is the one thing that is most evident in all history, men go on planning for this earthly life as though they were able to abide here for ever. We see them throwing all their energies into a political struggle, fiercely excited over the outcome, scrambling and crowding for a place, perfectly oblivious to the fact that even if they succeed in attaining the coveted object, it will disappear, and they themselves with it, almost as soon as they seize it. So it always has been, and so it will be to the end. They are as foolish as children on the beach, fighting over the sand houses they have built, which the next wave of the incoming tide will wash away, and at the same time overwhelm them. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 818.10}

What hope is there then for men?-Much, every way. Go back again to our elementary history book. Surely we can believe the record that is so conclusively substantiated by facts. That tells us that God created the earth not in vain, but to be inhabited (Isaiah 45:18), and that when He had completed it, with man upon it, He “saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.” Genesis 1:31. The critical eye of the Master could detect no flaw, nothing that could be improved, either in man or his condition and circumstances. Everything was as good as God Himself could make it. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 818.11}

Now we know that, “whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever.” Ecclesiastes 3:14. Therefore the condition of the earth in the beginning, and of men as well, is that which is to be through all eternity. God did not place men on the earth in order that they should be swept away like gnats, but that they should possess it for ever, even for ever and ever. Therefore, “We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” 2 Peter 3:13. Even though there were not many repetitions of that promise, the fact that in the beginning God placed a perfect man in a perfect earth, is sufficient promise that so it will be. In view of this promise we can confidently say, even when about to be carried away by the flood of time, “God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave; for He shall receive me.” Psalm 49:15. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 818.12}

Who will begin to read history from the beginning, and learn the great lesson that it teaches? Who will cease to chase the bubble that collapses as it is grasped, and begin to plan and live as citizens of a better country, that is, an heavenly, whose capital is a city that has everlasting foundations, whose builder and maker is God? {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 818.13}

**“The Promises to Israel. Two Laws” The Present Truth, 12, 52.**

E. J. Waggoner

From what has preceded, it will be evident that there are two laws just as there are two covenants, occupying the same relation to each other that the two covenants do to each other. One is the shadow of the other, the result of placing the veil of unbelief before the Light of life. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 819.1}

“For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life.” Proverbs 6:23. But Christ is the only Light of the world, the Light of life; so that the true and living law is found only in Him. It is His life, because it is in His heart, and out of the heart are the issues of life. He is the Living Stone, where we find the law in Person, full of grace as well as of truth. Of this, the law on tables was but the shadow, albeit an exact and perfect shadow. It tells us exactly what we shall find in Christ. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 819.2}

Although the law on tables of stone describes the perfect righteousness of God, it has no power to make itself manifest in us, no matter how greatly we may desire it. It is “weak through the flesh.” It is a faithful signpost, pointing out the way, but not carrying us in it. But Christ has “power over all flesh,” and in Him we find the law so full of life that, if we but consent to the law that it is good, and confess that Christ is come in the flesh, it will manifest itself in the thoughts and words and acts of our lives, in spite of the weakness of the flesh. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 819.3}

To those who know the law only as it stands in a book, and who consequently think that it rests wholly on them to do it, it is a law of works, and as such it does nothing but pronounce a curse upon them. But to those who know the law in Christ, it is a law of faith, which proclaims the blessing of pardon and peace. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 819.4}

As known only on tables of stone or in a book, it is a “law of sin and death,” (Romans 8:2), since “the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.” 1 Corinthians 15:56. But as known in Christ, it is “the law of the Spirit of life,” “because of righteousness.” {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 819.5}

As “written and engraven in stones,” it can never be anything else than “the ministration of death.” He who preaches simply the written law, telling people of their duty to keep it, and inciting them to do the best they can to keep it, is but ministering condemnation. But the same law written in fleshy tablets of the heart, “with the Spirit of the living God” (2 Corinthians 3:3), is life and peace; and he who preaches that Christ “is come in the flesh,” (1 John 4:2), and that when He dwells in a man to-day He is as obedient to the law as He was eighteen hundred years ago, is a minister of righteousness. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 819.6}

Known only as a code of rules to which we must make our lives conform-a “law of commandments contained in ordinances”-it is but a “yoke of bondage,” because one’s best efforts to keep it are themselves only sin; “for the Scripture hath concluded [shut up] all under sin;” and with each work “done in righteousness which we did ourselves,” the law but tightens its death grip on us, and strengthens the bars of our prison. But “the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” 2 Corinthians 3:17. Therefore in Christ the law is the “perfect law of liberty.” James 1:25. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 819.7}

When the Jews at Sinai volunteered to work God’s works for Him, they undertook their own salvation. They ignored the history of Abraham, and God’s covenant with him, to which their attention had been specially called. But God is long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance; and so, in harmony with His covenant with Abraham, He did not cast off the people, but endeavoured to teach them of Himself and His salvation, even out of their unbelief. He gave them a system of sacrifices and offerings, and a daily and yearly round of ceremonies that were exactly in keeping with the law which they had elected to keep, namely, the law of works. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 819.8}

The faithful among the people understood this well. David said, after he had committed a great sin, “Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it: Thou delightest not in burnt offering.” Psalm 51:16. And God, through the prophets, taught the people: “To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me?” “I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.” Isaiah 1:11. “Your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto Me.” Jeremiah 6:20. There was no virtue in them, for the law had only “a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things,” and could “never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.” Hebrews 10:1. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 819.9}

It would of course have been better, nay, the very best thing, if the people of Israel had preserved the simple and strong faith of Abraham and Moses, in which case they would have had no tabernacle but the one “which the Lord pitched, and not man;” no High Priest except Christ Himself, “made an High Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek;” no limit to the priesthood, but every one of them a priest “to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ;” no law but “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ;” in short, only the reality, and not the mere shadow. But since the people did not believe, it was a wonderful exhibition of God’s kindness and love and forbearance, that He gave them what must have served as a continual object lesson. The very “weakness and unprofitableness” (Hebrews 7:18) of the law of works was always apparent to every thoughtful person; and when the soul became awakened, that law whose only profit was conviction, and whose only power was death, directed them to Christ, to whom it shut them up for freedom and life. It made evident to them that in Christ, and in Him alone, they could find salvation. The truth as it is in Jesus, is the truth that sanctifies. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 820.1}

**HOW FORGIVENESS COMES**

Another point that it is necessary to notice particularly, although it has already been fully covered, is that nobody ever received salvation or the pardon of any sin by virtue of the law of works or the sacrifices connected with it. Moreover, God never caused the people to expect that the law could save, and nobody who truly believed Him ever thought that it could. Samuel said to Saul, “To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.” 1 Samuel 15:22. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 820.2}

The prophet king, from a heart melted to contrition by the mercy of God, wrote: “Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.” Psalm 51:16, 17. Through Hosea the Lord, said: “I desired mercy and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.” Hosea 6:6. Instead of the offering of fat beasts, the Lord desired that the people should “let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.” Amos 5:24. Recall the chapter on drinking in the righteousness of God. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 820.3}

“By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous.” Hebrews 11:4. He did not obtain righteousness by the sacrifice of the firstlings of the clock, but by the faith which prompted the offering. “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 5:1. “By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.” Ephesians 2:8. And so it was from the beginning; for “Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness,” and the same is affirmed of Enoch and Noah and all the patriarchs and prophets. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 820.4}

After the building of the tabernacle, sacrifices could not be offered in any other place; yet many of the people would necessarily be far away from it. Three times a year they were to assemble to it to worship. But they did not have to wait for those seasons to come, in order to receive forgiveness of the sins that they might have committed in the meantime. Wherever a man might be when he sinned, and became conscious of the plague of his own heart, he could acknowledge the sin to the Lord, who was always at hand, and experience, as well as we can, that “if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9. This is demonstrated in the case of David, when the prophet of God reproved him. David said, “I have sinned against the Lord;” and immediately came the assurance, “The Lord also hath put away thy sin.” 2 Samuel 12:13. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 820.5}

When this had taken place, then the repentant and forgiven soul could “offer the sacrifices of righteousness” (Psalm 4:5; 51:19), which would be acceptable to God. Then would the Lord be pleased with burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings upon His altar. And why?-Because they showed the gratitude of the heart, and because they were a recognition of the fact that all belonged to God, and that everything came from Him. In all true sacrifice there is the underlying principle that He who saves the soul is abundantly able to supply all physical needs, even though every vestige of worldly goods should be consumed. It is not the thought that we are giving to God, but that God gives to us, that makes the true sacrifice, since the only real sacrifice is the sacrifice of Christ. This was plainly manifest in every sacrifice that was offered. The people could see that they were not enriching the Lord, for the sacrifice was consumed. Every one who offered intelligently-everyone who worshipped in spirit and in truth-simply indicated that he depended solely on God both for the life that now is and for that which is to come. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 820.6}

**THE OLD COVENANT VALUELESS**

The old covenant, therefore, together with the law which pertained to it, was never for one moment of any value whatever for pardon and salvation from sin. It was “made void” even from the beginning. (See Psalm 89:30.) A demonstration of this is furnished by the pleading of Moses with God, when the children of Israel had made and worshipped the golden calf. When God said, “Let Me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them,” Moses besought the Lord and said:- {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 820.7}

“Lord, why doth Thy wrath wax hot against Thy people, which Thou hath brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did He bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from Thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against Thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Thy servants, to whom Thou swarest by Thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever.” Exodus 32:10-13. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 820.8}

Not a word was there about the covenant that had just been made, but only the covenant with Abraham. No particle of dependence was placed in the promises that the people had made, but only in the promise and the oath of God. If that covenant from Sinai had ever been of any value, it would surely have been when it was first made; but we see that even then it sunk entirely out of sight. It had no more power to save the people than had the parchment on which it was written. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 820.9}

Jeremiah in later years prayed: “O Lord though our iniquities testify against us, do Thou it for Thy name’s sake; for our backslidings are many; we have sinned against Thee.” “We acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers; for we have sinned against Thee. Do not abhor us, for Thy name’s sake, do not disgrace the throne of Thy glory; remember, break not Thy covenant with us. Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers? art not Thou He, O Lord our God? therefore we will wait upon Thee; for Thou hast made all these things.” Jeremiah 14:7, 20-22. That was all the plea God desired then, as well as now, for He said, “Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; and I will not cause Mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger for ever. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God.” Jeremiah 3:12, 13. It was as true then as now, that “if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.” {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 820.10}

God’s power as Creator and Redeemer, and His promise and oath, are all that any really repentant Jew ever depended on for salvation. None of them ever thought of depending upon their own works or promises, as the means of salvation. In short, from the days of Abel until now, there has been but one way of life and salvation; only one way of approaching to God; only one Name under heaven by which men could be saved. Since the day when salvation through the Seed of the woman was made known to Adam and Eve, before they were driven from Eden, there has been no more change in the plan of salvation, nor in God’s requirements for salvation, nor in the number to whom salvation was offered, than there has been in God Himself and His throne in heaven. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 821.1}

Men have changed, but God has not. There have always been men who have trusted in their own words and promises, and in ceremonies; but that does not prove that God wished them to do so. In the days of Moses and of Christ the majority of men trusted mostly in form and ceremony; and so they do to-day. Men have always been more ready to grasp the shadow than the substance. But that does not prove that in the ancient days God expected men to be saved by the law of works, any more than it proves that justification is not by faith now. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 821.2}

**WORKS OF SUPEREROGATION**

There has always been a tendency among men to multiply rites and ceremonies. This is the inevitable result of trusting to works for salvation. So it was in the days of Christ, and so it is now. When men get the idea that their works must save them, or that they themselves must do God’s works, they cannot be content with attempting to do no more than God’s commandments. So they teach for doctrines “the commandments of men,” adding to them continually until no man could even enumerate the “good works” that are required, much less could he do them. The yoke which even at first is galling and insupportable, becomes heavier and heavier, until at last religion becomes a matter of merchandise, and men for money or some other consideration buy themselves off from the necessity of doing the works that have been imposed upon them. And since it is even more impossible for men to do the commandments of God by their own efforts than it is to do the commandments of men, God’s law soon sinks in their estimation, even below the precepts of men. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 821.3}

All this is the natural and inevitable tendency of a failure to see Christ in the writings of Moses, and to understand that whatever ceremonies God ever gave were intended by their very emptiness to impress upon the people the absolute necessity of depending only on Christ, in whom alone is the substance. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 821.4}

**THE USE OF A LIKENESS**

One word further as to the shadow and the substance. As we have seen, the law delivered to the people in the wilderness of Sinai was but the shadow of the real law, which is the life of God. This is often urged in depreciation of the law; many people seem to think that since the law is but the shadow of good things, therefore we should choose that which is as opposite to it as possible. Not so do men argue in temporal matters. If we have a photograph-a shadow-of a man whom we wish to find, we do not light on a man whose features bear no resemblance to the likeness, and say, “This is the man.” No; we find a man of whom the photograph is the exact likeness, and then we know that we have the one we seek. Now the real law is the life of God, and the law delivered to the children of Israel-the shadow of good things-is the photograph of God’s character. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 821.5}

The one man in all the world who in every particular meets the specifications of that photograph, is, “the Man Christ Jesus,” in whose heart is the law. He is the image of the invisible God, but the living image-the Living Stone. Coming to Him in faith, we also become living stones, having the same law written in us that was in Him, for His Spirit transforms us into the same living image; and the law on the tables of stone from Sinai will be the witness that the resemblance is perfect. But if there is in any particular a deviation from the perfect photograph, lack of resemblance will show that we are not of the true family of God. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 821.6}

**“‘I Have Told You Before’” The Present Truth, 12, 52.**

E. J. Waggoner

When Jesus warned His disciples against the false Christs and false prophets who should arise in the later times, and should deceive many, He said: “Behold I have told you before.” The continued reiteration of counsel, advice, warning, injunction and exhortation, is a most marked feature of Christ’s conversations with His disciples, as narrated in the Gospels. If this is so true of the few words of His there set down, how very much more true must it have been if one but considered all the daily conversation and teaching of those years together. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 821.7}

All the plan of salvation He laid before them again and again. The strange, tragic mystery of His crucifixion, death and burial, and resurrection, He foretold to them over and over again, and then promised them that after His resurrection He would go before them into the Galilee. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 821.8}

Yet, although they had seen Him call Lazarus from the grave after he had lain there more than three days, they apparently did not comprehend that He would Himself rise from the dead, as He had repeatedly said to them. When He had told them that He would go before them into Galilee (Matthew 26:32), why did they not all, of one accord, go down into Galilee to meet Him? Because they had forgotten that He had said such a thing until the message from the Lord afterwards recalled it to their minds. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 821.9}

Just so they forgot the oft repeated words of the Master regarding the matter of His death and time of His resurrection. Still, though they were such dull students,-learned so slowly the lessons of truth and life and salvation,-even forgot and neglected again and again the simplest details of facts which He presented to them,-still, for all that, Christ loved them and did not turn from them. He scarcely ever reproved them for their slowness of mind and dulness of heart,-He waited for their conversion. He looked forward to the time when they should be converted, as is shown by His words to Peter, “when thou art converted.” {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 821.10}

What a lesson of patience all this is to those who strive to present the truths of religion to the world which is so slow to hear, and slower still to accept and act. And yet much more than that it may be a comfort, unspeakable, to all, to realise how tenderly, with patient longsuffering, Christ bore with the errors, failures, ignorance, seemingly hopeless inability to comprehend spiritual things, which so often characterised those whom He had called to His personal discipleship. In our Bibles we have His words,-in all the wide world about us we have the material evidence of the expression of His word of creative power. The reiteration of God’s teachings are even more numerous in our ears and eyes than their repetition to the disciples themselves. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 822.1}

**“Need of Teaching Peace Principles” The Present Truth, 12, 52.**

E. J. Waggoner

It used to be said that kings and rulers, and not peoples, were responsible for wars, to which the people devoted their treasure and their lives. But growth of constitutionalism and increasing influence of the masses in national affairs has not resulted in lessening the warlike spirit. This is so sedulously cultivated under the name of patriotism that only recently we have seen statesmen resisting popular feeling in the interests of peace. A daily newspaper, commenting on the growth of militarism alongside the growth of democracy, says:- {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 822.2}

Modern Europe teaches the significant lesson that in proportion as newspaper and Parliamentary education has advanced, and in proportion as the popular voice has obtained increased power in the government of nations, expenditure of national wealth for military and naval purposes has augmented. This fact is particularly observable in this country. Whilst expenditure votes have increased with increasing population, our military and naval expenditure votes have increased by leaps and bounds. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 822.3}

The facts are deeply significant for Christians. They show how rapidly the spirit of violence is filling the masses, and how great the need of true education and the principles of peace. It is not that the dreadful demon of war can ever be driven out; the Word of God shows that it will desolate the earth to the end. But now, while yet the general, “armed peace” exists, it needs to be made plain that no instructed Christian can have anything to do with designs upon the lives of those to whom he is commissioned by Christ to give the Gospel of life. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 822.4}

**“The Bakers’ Sunday Laws” The Present Truth, 12, 52.**

E. J. Waggoner

The continued prosecutions of bakers for baking bread on Sundays has led to a considerable agitation for the repeal of that section of the Bread Act which prohibits Sunday baking. On the other hand certain organisations of bakers have memorialised Lord Salisbury, urging him to oppose any attempt to repeal that section. As a matter of pure right and justice there cannot be two opinions about that provision of the law. But those who wish and interest it is that it should be retained are far in the ascendancy as regards the numbers and influence; there is scarcely the least likelihood, therefore, that the agitation will affect the removal of that ancient and objectionable feature from the law. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 823.1}

When once an unrighteous law has gained a place in the statute books, the fact of its unrighteousness will militate little for its removal unless it works a hardship to such a majority of the people that a popular clamour is raised against it through the great number of those whose personal interest have suffered thereby. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 823.2}

In this case it would seem that those who prefer that the improper law should be retained, are to those who desire its removal in about the ratio of one hundred to one. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 823.3}

**“The Eastern Question Now” The Present Truth, 12, 52.**

E. J. Waggoner

The oppressive sense of overwhelming danger leads statesmen of all nations to deal carefully with the problems of the Eastern question. Yet they prepare for its eventual solution, little realising that their own destiny is bound up with that of Turkey; and that when the Ottoman Power, which occupies the very territory of the “king of the north,” of the eleventh of Daniel, “shall come to his end, and none shall help him,” it will be the signal for the ending of human history. For years the situation has remained critical, and now it has taken on a new phase, as a result of recent events. The President of Robert College, Constantinople, says of this change:- {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 824.1}

“The events of the past two years have introduced a new factor into the Eastern question. England has taken up a new position. She is ready to make an end of the Ottoman Empire, as hopelessly corrupt; and a year ago she not only made this known to the Powers but sent her fleet to the Dardanelles and threatened to send it to Constantinople. No one who is not familiar with the inner working of European diplomacy can imagine the consternation which this action caused on the Continent. The partition of the Ottoman Empire is the one question which the five Powers do not dare even to mention in a whisper. To seriously discuss it would break up both the alliances and bring on a general war.” {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 824.2}

**“Items of Interest” The Present Truth, 12, 52.**

E. J. Waggoner

-Along the Macedonian frontier the people said to be gathering arms and ammunition in expectation of a rising against Turkish rule in the spring. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 830.1}

-The Spanish arms seem to have had some alight successes in Cuba. It is taken as a true re-port that the leader of the insurgents, Macao, is dead. Ho was a half-breed Cuban, of great ability it is said. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 830.2}

-It is estimated that England pays a million pounds a year for toys for its fifteen millions of children. ?600,000 worth of these toys are imported from abroad,-Germany, Holland, France, Belgium, etc. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 830.3}

-The Hamburg dock strike has been long continued. Lately the strikers have engaged in some violence. Rumours of troubles in all ports are passing about, but as yet the situation is critical only in Hamburg. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 830.4}

-One Rhodesian chief, near Salisbury, is still defiant, and more fighting is expected. An old settler in Matabeleland declares that even now the prospects of long-continued peace with the natives are not reassuring. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 830.5}

-When the “P. & O.” liner capsised in the Thames last week, one of the seven men who were drowned in the tanks, where they were working, might have saved himself, but gave way to a younger man, who was the last to escape through the man-hole. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 830.6}

-The latest returns show that 331,000 persons are employed on the relief works in India. The sufferings amongst the women and children in the famine-stricken districts is said to be most distressing, and a relief fund has been opened in this country. The plague shows no signs of abating in Bombay, and there has been a large exodus of natives from the city. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 830.7}

-The immense estates left by brewers, at their death, is an evidence of where much of the people’s money goes. A brewer has just died whose personalty alone has been declared at two million pounds sterling,-two died in 1893 whose personalty figured up, the one ?2,876,731, the other ?361,568,-yet another died in 1894, whose personalty was declared at ?1,018,375. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 830.8}

-Emigration to America has created so great a dearth of labour in the agricultural districts of Germany that Chinese coolies are now being imported for field work in the provinces of Silesia, East Prussia, Posen, and Pomerania. Coolies are content to work for tenpence a day, and if they continue to arrive in large numbers emigration of German peasants will likely receive a great impetus. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 830.9}

-For more than a year the Russian military authorities have been storing large quantities of grain and ammunition in the extensive granaries and other buildings recently erected in the vicinity of Kars, in the Caucasus; the garrisons of this world-famous fortress and other towns near the frontier have been largely added to, and it is calculated that the Russian army south of the Caucasus numbers quite 100,000 men. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 830.10}

**“Back Page” The Present Truth, 12, 52.**

E. J. Waggoner

On Sunday, the 22nd day of November, for the first time in more than four hundred years, the ringing of a bell sounded forth from a Catholic church in Copenhagen. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 832.1}

If it be asked, “Why do you publish a paper, and write articles for it?” the reply is, The object of the Present Truth is to lead people to the Word, and to open it to them. We have heard that once and again it has been objected that our paper contains nothing that cannot be found in the Bible. It is our desire that this may always be said with truth. If we can give people such a taste of “the good word of God” that they will long for more, and will be induced to eat and drink freely from the great storehouse, we shall be happy. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 832.2}

**“Attention to Bible-reading” The Present Truth, 12, 52.**

E. J. Waggoner

Attention to Bible-reading .-If you want to be strong Christian people, hide the Bible in your heart. You make a tremendous mistake, for your own soul’s sake, if your religious reading consists in what people have said and thought about Scripture more than in the Scripture itself. Why should you dip your cans into the reservoir, when you can take them up to where the spring comes gushing out of the hillside, pure, and limpid, and living?-Dr. Maclaren. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 832.3}

Exhortations of this kind cannot be too often repeated or too strongly emphasised. It is a deplorable fact that most people who profess an interest in the Bible, will go almost anywhere except to the Book itself, to find out what it teaches. One might as well expect to grow strong by reading treatises on the nutritive value of various foods, as to grow wise unto salvation by reading comments on the Bible. He who would grow stronger must keep the real food, and so with the Word of God which is living bread and water. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 832.4}

**“Strength Now” The Present Truth, 12, 52.**

E. J. Waggoner

Strength Now .-Some time you intend to be strong, and do better; when this weakness is overcome the strength will come. This thought that sometime the overcoming power will come makes many content to be weak. But God is strong now. We are weak; well, “He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength.” Isaiah 40:29. It is a wrong idea of how strength comes that leads one to go on in weakness expecting some day to get strong. “Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might,” is God’s command. It is not to the strong, but to the weak that He gives strength. Confess the weakness, not as an excuse for continuing in it, but as the reason for laying hold of God’s strength now. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 832.5}

**“The Unsteady Earth” The Present Truth, 12, 52.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Unsteady Earth .-On Thursday morning, the 17th, at about half-past five, a sharp earthquake shock was felt nearly all over England. In some places crockery was thrown to the floor and church bells are said to have been rung by the vibration. No material injury resulted, except that in Hereford a lady with a weak heart was frightened to death. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 832.6}

Although there have been earthquakes in England that have wrecked buildings, yet they are so infrequent that this one has caused widespread comment. The Chronicle closes a “leader” upon it with these words:- {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 832.7}

Fortunately for us there is not much temptation to study earthquakes in this country. They occur so rarely, and in such tempered form that we almost welcome them as excellent subjects for light conversation. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 832.8}

Such remarks as the foregoing are certainly very light indeed. One need not be a wild alarmist, to think seriously over the occurrence of earthquakes. Our Saviour spoke of the rise of nation against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and the occurrence of famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places, as “the beginning of sorrows” (Matthew 24:7, 8), connected with the final dissolution and subsequent renewing of the earth. When the solid earth begins to move, it is always a serious matter. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 832.9}

**“The Root of the Matter” The Present Truth, 12, 52.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Root of the Matter .-It is an encouraging sign when those who are labouring for reform recognise the cause of the evil which they seek to remove or minimise. Lady Henry Somerset, when asked how she accounted for the marked increase of drunkenness, especially among women, gave heredity as the prime cause. The present generation is suffering the accumulated effects of many generations of drunkenness. Then she added:- {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 832.10}

Other causes are insufficient food, bad air, and dreary surroundings. Temperance workers too often refuse to recognise these facts. They go around asking the people to sign the pledge, but they never seek to deal with the causes which lie at the root of drunkenness, especially in the case of women-causes which no mere written promises can remove. Consider the hopeless dullness of the lives of Englishwomen in the working classes.... . The wife of the English workingman has nothing but sordid, dismal, unrelieved monotony. Is it any wonder that too often she seeks relief in drink? {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 832.11}

This touches the root of the matter, and shows that the only practical way to deal with the drinking habits of a people is to improve their habits of eating and general living. This of course is only a portion of what is needed; before the victory can be won, the poor souls must be brought to think of something besides themselves; and for lifting people out of themselves there is nothing that can take the place of Christ and His Gospel. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 832.12}

**“The Good Way” The Present Truth, 12, 52.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Good Way .-The Chinese missionaries, in the region of Foochow, have given a good lesson to missionary boards, which are so prone to demand punishment of offenders and the exaction of compensation whenever heathen passion results in the destruction of mission property. The Christian says:- {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 832.13}

An important memorandum has been sent home by seventy missionaries in the neighbourhood of Foochow, in China, to their respective boards at home, pointing out that a conspicuous example of disinterestedness has been shown by no compensation having been sought for the massacres of missionaries in August, 1895. Now, in answer to prayer, there is a widespread and general movement towards Christianity among all classes of the population and in all parts of the province, hundreds having joined the local churches, a fact which has aroused the authorities, and brought more persecution. {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 832.14}

If it had been left to the missionaries, we hope, there would also have been no demand for the execution of the ringleaders for the murder of the missionaries who lost their lives. What an awful thing for professing Christians to demand that men fighting against the Gospel shall be launched red-handed into eternity! {PTUK December 24, 1896, p. 832.15}

**“‘His Time Was Not Yet Come’” The Present Truth, 12, 53.**

E. J. Waggoner

“These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no man laid hands on Him; for His hour was not yet come.” John 8:20. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 833.1}

How many times they had tried to lay hands on Him. Only in the preceding chapter we learned that “the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take Him,” but the officers returned without having so much as spoken to Him. At one time the enraged Jews had Him in their hands, “and thrust Him out of the city, and led Him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong. But He passing through the midst of them went His way.” Luke 4:29, 30. All the plotting of the enemies of Jesus availed nothing against Him, until His time came. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 833.2}

Why was it?-It was simply because He had been sent into the world by the Father to do a definite work, and He “was faithful to Him that appointed Him.” Hebrews 3:1, 2. To accomplish the work was His sole thought and life, more to Him than food and drink and rest. See John 4:6-8, 31-34. He knew that the Father, who sent Him, was always with Him, and so He left the management of His case, and the protection of Himself, to the Father. While He was thus devoted to the work of God, always doing those things that please Him, Jesus was as safe from injury as God Himself; for it was God that was working in Him, and it is not possible that God would allow Himself to be hindered or stopped in His work by man. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 833.3}

Jesus therefore needed not to waste one moment in worrying about His own safety; He knew that no one could do Him harm until the Father permitted it, and then when He had finished the work He had been given to do, it was His joy to suffer as well as it was to work. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 833.4}

But of what use is all this to us? Was it written simply as a matter of curiosity? When we have read it, and know the facts, is that the end of the matter? Is there no lesson of encouragement in it for us? Of course there is encouragement for us, for it was written only for our learning, “that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope.” But we often lose the lesson of Christ’s life, because we fail to recognise or to remember the fact that He was a representative man.” In all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren.” Hebrews 3:17. “As He is, so are we in this world.” 1 John 4:17. God manifested Himself in the flesh of Jesus of Nazareth, in order to show what He could accomplish in the flesh, not simply of one man, but of all men who will allow Him to dwell in them in His fulness. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 833.5}

Those who regard Christ as being peculiar, an exception among men, lose the benefit of the Divine manifestation in the flesh. True, He was peculiar, just as He gave Himself for us, that He might purify unto Himself a peculiar people. To those who receive Him, He gives power to become sons of God, own brothers of Christ, having equal rights and privileges with Him. John 1:12; Romans 8:16, 17. He sends His disciples forth, even as He Himself was sent forth, assuring them that they are loved by the Father just as much as He Himself is (John 17:18, 23), and that He is always with them. Matthew 28:20. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 833.6}

“Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.” 1 Peter 4:19. The children of God, who are consecrated to His service, intent only on doing His will, have no more reason to fear than Jesus had, and no more reason to engage in self-defence. If their work is the Lord’s, they may be sure that no man can stay that work, and that they are safe until the portion of it allotted to them is accomplished. Let it be our sole business to finish the work God has given us to do, and resting calmly in the knowledge that our times are in His hand. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 833.7}

**“‘An High Look’” The Present Truth, 12, 53.**

E. J. Waggoner

When one reads of princes as suppliants at the foot of the Pope, and of almost daily pomp and ceremony, it is not difficult to see what the prophet meant when he described the persecuting power that was to rise after the division of the Roman Empire as one “whose look was more stout than his fellows.” Prouder claims were never made by the most arrogant of kings than are made by the priest-king who represents the Papacy. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 833.8}

But stout looks are not peculiar to Roman prelates, nor even to official and officious ecclesiasticism anywhere. Pride is the root principle of the Papacy, and, as pride is natural to every heart, every man needs to be saved from popery. “An high look and a proud heart” are as much an abomination to the Lord in one place as another. The Lord denounces the ecclesiastical Babylon for its pride, and calls upon His people to come out of it, for it shall be “utterly burned with fire.” Revelation 18:8. But that day will devour all pride and self-esteem. “For behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up.” Malachi 3:1. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 834.1}

“And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.” Isaiah 2:17. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 834.2}

**“Being with Christ” The Present Truth, 12, 53.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Then said Jesus again unto them, I go My way, and ye shall seek Me, and shall die in your sins; whither I go, ye cannot come.” John 8:21. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 834.3}

That is easily understood; of course those who die in their sins cannot go to be with the Lord; we all know that, for we have been taught from infancy that it is only the good who go to heaven when they die. Yes; we can well believe that those wicked Jews who persistently sought to take the life of Jesus, could not go to be with Him, if they died unrepentant. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 834.4}

But, hold a minute; not long afterwards Jesus used similar language to an entirely different class of people. Pass to chapter 13, verse 33, and we find Jesus saying to His beloved disciples, whom He tenderly addressed as “little children,” “Yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek Me; and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.” {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 834.5}

“Ah, yes,” says one, “but He meant that they could not follow Him then, because they were to live several years after His crucifixion and ascension. Later on He said to Peter, ‘Thou canst not follow Me now; but thou shalt follow Me afterwards.’” Verse 36. Yes, but the next verse shows us that Peter could not follow Him then, even though He should lay down His life for him. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 834.6}

Now read a little further. The words of Jesus, “Whither I go, ye cannot come,” very naturally filled the hearts of His disciples with sorrow. They had indeed left all for Him, and had learned to depend on Him; and now the thought that He was going to leave them alone, troubled them. So Jesus addressed to them these comforting words:- {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 834.7}

“Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am there ye may be also.” John 14:1-3. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 834.8}

Now we know what time Jesus referred to when He said “afterward.” The “afterward,” when His disciples should be with Him, is when He comes again, “the second time, without sin, unto salvation.” Hebrews 9:28. He has not yet come again, and therefore no soul has gone to be with Jesus since His ascension. Just as surely as He went away from this earth, so surely will He come again. But it is no more sure that He went away, than that He went away for a definite purpose, and that purpose was to prepare a place for His disciples. The place is not yet prepared, for He has not yet come again. Moreover since He is to return for the express purpose of receiving His disciples unto Himself, it is certain that none are with Him now; for we may be sure that Jesus will not come to earth on a fool’s errand; He will not come to take people to heaven, who are already there; and He would not tell them that He would come for them, knowing all the time that they were to be with Him many years before His return. No; whether a man dies a saint or a sinner, he cannot go to be with the Lord at his death. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 834.9}

The same words of comfort that Jesus spoke to the disciples are those which the Apostle Paul speaks to us all, by the Lord’s authority. “For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [go before] them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 834.10}

So shall we be ever with the Lord. How? By the resurrection of the dead, and the translation of the living. The dead do not go before the living. All wait until Christ’s coming, and then all are “changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption.” 1 Corinthians 15:51-53. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 834.11}

This change will take place “in the twinkling of an eye.” This will be as true of the dead as of the living. A thousand years of absolute unconsciousness is as no time at all. So to the saint who closed his eyes in death ages before the coming of the Lord, it will be the same as though he closed his eyes and instantly opened them again to behold the glory of the Lord. All the time between will be but as the twinkling of an eye. There will be no disappointment. To the saints who, like Stephen, have in their last moments seen the Lord in glory, it will be the same as though they had that instant gone to be with Him. Their eyelids fell, the dreamless sleep of years is to them no longer than the twinkling of an eye, and they raise their eyelids to see the Lord still standing to receive them. “Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 834.12}

**“Pertinent Questions” The Present Truth, 12, 53.**

E. J. Waggoner

Pertinent Questions .-Having seen the statement in the New York Independent that there were more than three thousand congregations in the Presbyterian and Congregational bodies and the United States that did not have a single addition by conversion in the last year, Mr. D. L. Moody writes as follows to that paper:- {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 834.13}

Is this the result of what they call the “modern criticism” of the Bible? Is this a specimen of the better times, when we would get rid of the old stories about Moses writing the Pentateuch, and the sun and moon standing still, and the fish swallowing Jonah? How much of all this is owing to the politics our ministers have been preaching lately, and the talks on the Labour question, and the stereopticon shows on Sunday evenings, and all these other things that have been driving out the blessed Gospel of Jesus Christ? When ministers go into preludes on current topics, how can they expect any afterludes of conversions? {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 834.14}

These questions are practical, and may be considered with profit on both sides of the Atlantic. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 834.15}

**“The Promises to Israel. Entering the Promised Land” The Present Truth, 12, 53.**

E. J. Waggoner

“And about the time of forty years suffered He their manners in the wilderness.” Acts 13:18. In these few words the Apostle Paul in his discourse in the synagogue at Antioch disposed of the forty years’ wandering of the Israelites in the wilderness; and for the purpose of our present study we may pass it by nearly as hastily. Their manners were such that God literally “suffered” them. The record is one of murmurings and rebellion. “They believed not in God, and trusted not in His salvation.” Psalm 78:22. “How oft did they provoke Him in the wilderness, and grieve Him in the desert! Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel. They remembered not His hand, nor the day when He delivered them from the enemy; how He had wrought His signs in Egypt, and His wonders in the field of Zoan.” Verses 40-43. Although for forty years they daily saw the works of God, they did not learn His ways; wherefore, says the Lord, “I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known My ways. So I sware in My wrath, they shall not enter into My rest.” Hebrews 3:10, 11. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 835.1}

**AN INHERITANCE OF FAITH**

“So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.” What does that teach us as to the nature of the inheritance to which God was leading His people?-Simply this, that it was an inheritance that could be possessed only by those who had faith-that faith alone could win it. Worldly, temporal possessions may be, and are, gained and held by men who disbelieve, and who even despise and blaspheme God. Indeed, unbelieving men have the most of this world’s goods. Many besides the writer of the seventy-third Psalm have been envious at the prosperity of the wicked; but such feeling of envy arises only when one looks at the things that are temporal, instead of at the things that are eternal. “The prosperity of fools shall destroy them.” God has chosen the poor of this world, “rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him.” James 2:5. That kingdom is “not of this world” (John 18:36), but is “a better country, that is, an heavenly,” for which the patriarchs looked. It was to this country that God promised to lead His people when He delivered them from Egypt. But it can be possessed only by those who are “rich in faith.” {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 835.2}

The time had come when God could carry out His purpose with His people. The faithless ones who had said that their little ones would die in the desert had perished, and now those same children, grown to manhood, and trusting the Lord, were about to enter the promised land. After the death of Moses, God said to Joshua: “Arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.” Joshua 1:2, 3. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 835.3}

**CROSSING THE JORDAN**

But the Jordan rolled between the Israelites and the land to which they were to go with all their flocks and little ones. The river was at its height, overflowing all its banks, and there were no bridges; but the same God who had brought His people through the Red Sea was still leading them, and He was as able as ever to do wonders. All the people took their places according to the Lord’s directions, the priests bearing the ark being about a thousand paces in advance of the host. Onward they marched toward the river, whose flood still kept on its way. To the very brink of the stream they came, yet the waters receded not an inch. But this people had learned to trust the Lord, and, as He had told them to go on, they hesitated not for an instant. Into the water they went, although they knew that it was so deep that it could not possibly be forded, and swift enough to carry them away. They had nothing to do with considering difficulties; their part was to obey the Lord and go forward, and His to make the way. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 835.4}

“And it came to pass,...as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, that the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan; and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed, and were cut off; and the people passed over right against Jericho. And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.” Joshua 3:14-17. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 835.5}

What a display of faith and trust in God! The bed of the Jordan was dry, it is true, for the people to pass over, but on the right hand was a wall of water, piling still higher and higher, with no visible support. Picture to yourself that mighty heap of water, apparently threatening to overwhelm the people, and you can better appreciate the faith of those who calmly passed over before it. All the time of the passage the priests stood calm and unmoved in the midst of the river bed, and the people marched over without breaking ranks. There was no unseemly scramble to get over quickly, lest the waters should come down upon them; for “he that believeth shall not make haste.” {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 835.6}

**FREE AT LAST**

“At that time the Lord said unto Joshua, Make thee sharp knives, and circumcise again the children of Israel the second time.” “For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people that were men of war, which came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they obeyed not the voice of the Lord; unto whom the Lord sware that He would not show them the land, which the Lord sware unto their fathers that He would give us, a land that floweth with milk and honey. And their children, whom He raised up in their stead, them Joshua circumcised; because they had not circumcised them by the way. And it came to pass, when they had done circumcising all the people, that they abode in their places in the camp, till they were whole. And the Lord said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you.” Joshua 5:2-9. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 836.1}

In order to see the full force of this ceremony at this time we must recall the significance of circumcision, and must also know what is meant by “the reproach of Egypt.” Circumcision signified righteousness by faith (Romans 4:11); true circumcision, whose praise is not of men, but of God, is obedience to the law, through the Spirit (Romans 2:25-29); it is complete distrust of self, and confidence and rejoicing in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:3. In the instance before us we see that God Himself commanded the people to be circumcised, a positive proof that He Himself accepted them as righteous. As with Abraham, so with them, their faith was counted to them for righteousness. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 836.2}

“Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people.” Proverbs 14:34. Sin was “the reproach of Egypt,” and it was this that was rolled away from the children of Israel; for the true circumcision of the heart, which alone is all that God counts as circumcision, is “the putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.” Colossians 2:11. “Thus saith the Lord God: In the day when I chose Israel, and lifted up Mine hand unto the seed of the house of Jacob, and made Myself known unto them in the land of Egypt, when I lifted up Mine hand unto them, saying, I am the Lord your God;...then said I unto them, Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt; I am the Lord your God. But they rebelled against Me, and would not hearken unto Me; they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Eypgt.” Ezekiel 20:58. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 836.3}

It was because they would not forsake the idols of Egypt, that the men who left that country with Moses did not enter into the promised land. A people cannot at one and the same time be both free and in bondage. The bondage of Egypt-“the reproach of Egypt”-was not merely the physical labour which the people were forced to do without reward, but was the abominable idolatry of Egypt, into which they had fallen. It was from this that God would deliver His people, when He said to Pharaoh, “Let My people go, that they may serve Me.” {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 836.4}

This freedom the people had at last obtained. God Himself declared that the bondage, the sin, the reproach of Egypt was rolled away from them. Then could it be sung, “Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.” Isaiah 26:2. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 836.5}

**THE VICTORY OF FAITH**

“By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.” Hebrews 11:30. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 836.6}

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Hebrews 11:1. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 836.7}

“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.” 2 Corinthians 10:4. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 836.8}

The children of Israel were in the promised land, but yet to all appearances they were no more in possession than they were before. They still dwelt in tents, while the inhabitants of the land were intrenched in their cities, which were “walled up to heaven,” fully as strong as when the mere report of them caused the children of Israel to lose heart and turn back forty years before. But stone walls and multitudes of armed men avail nothing when the battle is the Lord’s. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 836.9}

“Now the city of Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel; none went out, and none came in.” Joshua 6:1. Jericho was the first city to be taken and the mode of operation which the Lord directed, was one calculated to test to the utmost the faith of the Israelites. All the people were to march round the city in perfect silence, with the exception that the priests who went ahead with the ark were to blow on their trumpets. “Joshua had commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any noise proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout.” Joshua 6:10. As soon as they had completed this silent circuit of the city, they were to go into camp. The same thing was to be done for six successive days, and on the seventh day the circuit was to be made seven times. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 836.10}

Picture to yourself the situation. Tramp, tramp, the whole multitude went round the city, and then went into camp. Again and again they repeated this, with no apparent result. The walls stood as high and as grim as before; not a stone had fallen, not a bit of mortar had been loosened. Yet not one word of complaint was heard from one of the people. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 836.11}

We can well believe that for the first day or two the sight of that great host marching silently about the city filled the inhabitants with dread, more especially as they had previously been terrified by the reports of what God had done for those people. But as the march was repeated day after day, seemingly to no purpose, it would be most natural for the beleaguered ones to pick up courage, and regard the whole affair as a farce. Many would begin to mock, and to taunt the Israelites with their senseless methods. The history of warfare furnished no precedent for such a mode of proceeding to capture a city, and it would have been contrary to human nature if some of the people of the city had not openly ridiculed the marchers outside. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 836.12}

But not a single word of retort came from those ranks. Patiently the children of Israel bore whatever taunts may have been hurled at them. Not a voice was heard saying, “What is the use of all this?” “What kind of general is this man Joshua?” “Does he suppose that by our measured tread we can set the walls to vibrating so that they will fall down?” “What’s the use of tiring our legs and wearing out our shoes in this child’s parade?” “Well, I am tired of this fooling, and shall stay in my tent until we can do something worth the while.” Anyone who knows anything of human nature knows that these and similar expressions would freely be uttered under such circumstances by the most of people; and it would be remarkable if there were not open revolt against the proceedings. This would have been the case with the children of Israel forty years before; and the fact that they patiently and quietly marched around the city thirteen times, seemingly with no object, is proof of the most remarkable faith that the world has ever known. Think of an entire nation among which there was not one fault-finder, not one to utter a word of complaint when put to inconvenience which he could not understand, and which was apparently useless. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 836.13}

The seventh day was nearly gone, and the thirteenth round of the city was completed. Everything remained just as at the beginning of their march. Now came the last, the crowning test of faith. “And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the Lord hath given you the city.” Joshua 6:16. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 837.1}

Why should they shout?-Because the Lord had given them the city; they were to shout the victory. But what evidence was there that the victory was won? they could see no gain. Oh, faith is “the evidence of things not seen.” The victory was theirs, because God had granted it to them, and their faith claimed it at His word. Not a moment did they hesitate; their faith was perfect, and at the word of command a triumphant shout rose from that vast assembly. “And it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat.” Joshua 6:20. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 837.2}

The promise to those people was the very same that God now extends to us; and all things recorded of them are for our learning. “They got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them” (Ps. xliv.), but the Lord’s right hand saved them. Even so will He grant unto us that we shall “be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us,” that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life. Luke 1:68-75. This deliverance is through Christ, who is now, as well as in the days of Joshua, the “Captain of the Lord’s host.” He says, “In the word ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” John 16:33. “And ye are complete in Him, which is the Head of all principality and power.” Colossians 2:10. Therefore “this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith.” 1 John 5:4. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 837.3}

**“‘Could Ye Not Watch with Me?’” The Present Truth, 12, 53.**

E. J. Waggoner

When the last supper was prepared, and, in the evening, Christ and the twelve had seated themselves and were eating, He said to them, “Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray Me.” Later, when they had finished this, their last meal together, and their hearts were warm and tender from the loving acts of service from the Master, which followed the supper, they sang a hymn and went out upon the mount of Olives. Then Christ said to them, “All ye shall be offended because of Me this night.” But Peter replied, “Though all men should be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended.” Whereupon Christ foretold to him the thrice repeated denial of Him which he should make before the morning light. This roused Peter to the still stronger assertion. “Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee.” All the disciples, also, said the same thing. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 838.1}

They were apparently very positive,-it seemed that they spoke with absolute assurance. Nothing, not even the fear of an immediate and ignominious death, could influence them to deny Him. But when they had come to Gethsemane He said to them, “Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.” And selecting Peter, James, and John, for a more special test of their love and tenderness toward Him, and additional opportunity for its expression, He went with them on yet a little farther and there left them with the request that they stay and watch with Him. The words with which He prefaced this request were enough to have filled their hearts with such a tender earnestness of anxious affection as to have driven sleep from their eyes,-“My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.” Yet, in both mind and heart, they so failed to realise and appreciate His anguish and its cause, that they not only did not watch and pray with Him, but slept. Three times He repeated to them their opportunity, and yet they still slept,-returning, then, to the others, they all were sleeping. They had all forsaken Him, already, in their ignorance and self-assurance. They were positive in their assertions that they would never deny or forsake Him. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 838.2}

But all their protestations had been made purely in the assumption that each was able to carry out his intention in his own strength. Here was lacking entirely the humility of faith and trust in the power of God to supplement their expression of their intention to be faithful with the necessary strength and wisdom to remain so indeed. The truth is they were still unconverted men. They did not yet realise the weakness of man,-nor yet understand the power of God. They had not yet distinguished things material from things spiritual. That they were so dull of heart and soul of understanding increased their sorrows and multiplied their trials, while it deprived them of the joy, almost supernal, which might have been theirs to have been in loving sympathy with the Master in those last hours of agony. They must have afterwards felt that the utter self-abrogation and service of their whole after lives could not atone for any one of the lost moments of watching and prayer which they allowed to pass so carelessly then. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 838.3}

But that which Christ said to them, He still says, and to all,-Watch! Pray! Carry My Gospel to the people! It is just as possible for us to lose the great opportunities offered us now, as it was for them then. The victories to be gained over self and Satan are just as great now as then. The work to be done, in our own hearts, and in the world, is no less-but there is less time in which to do it. Yet, at the same time, the love of God is the same, without diminution or variance, and to Him all things are possible, so, therefore, to us, through His love and omnipotence. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 838.4}

The disciples failed pitifully when they thought they were able, in their own strength, even to profess Christ only, to the world. The lesson to us is that we should fall into no such error, but, asking, receive from Him day by day the necessary strength and wakefulness in which to watch, and pray, and work with Him until the end. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 838.5}

**“The Lesson of Calamities” The Present Truth, 12, 53.**

E. J. Waggoner

“When Thy judgments are in the earth,” says the prophet, “the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.” Indifference to eternal things is the sin of all ages. Men rush on after the unabiding things of this world and the ears are closed to any message of the abiding truths of the Gospel. But as the coming of the Lord draws near, and as Satan works with greater power to destroy, and as men withdraw themselves more and more from the protection of the Lord, increasing calamities will startle many into giving attention to those things which concern their salvation. On the other hand, the great mass of mankind will refuse to allow the very judgments of the Lord to turn them from the pursuit of temporal profit and pleasure. For the prophet continues, “Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness; in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord.” Isaiah 26:9, 10. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 838.6}

The Review of Reviews describes some of the great calamities which marked the year just past, and which follow us into the new year. After referring to the Indian famine, it says:- {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 838.7}

“If Asia has been scourged by the land refusing to yield a harvest owing to the heavens denying the fruitful showers, without which the most fertile loam is as barren as alkali, her sister continent has this year suffered from a disaster hardly less appalling. The rinderpest, said to have been introduced into Abyssinia by plague-smitten cattle sent to supply the Italian army with food, found Africa as virgin soil for its ravages. From the mountains of Rasselas it began its march southward, eating up as it went nine-tenths of the hoofed beasts, wild and tame, of the African Continent. The herds upon which the natives of the interior depend so largely for their sustenance were mown down as the meadow-grass falls before the scythe, only the fringes being spared. Nor does the rinderpest discriminate between the domesticated and the wild cattle. The savage buffalo wallowing in the marsh found no method of escape from the invisible Death. Nor were swift-footed antelope able to elude the swifter darts of the deadly archer. Three out of five species of antelope died like rotten sheep. The others, for some cause not yet discovered, seem to be immune. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 838.8}

For some time it was hoped that the broad waters of the Zambesi would offer an insuperable barrier to the southerly-marching rinderpest. But the subtle contagion leapt the might river and began its ravages in Rhodesia. It is the fashion to speak of war as the sum of all evils. The war in Matabeleland was a picnic to the horror of the cattle plague. It is computed that out of 200,000 cattle in Rhodesia it has not left 15,000 alive. The milk, the beef, the leather, and the transport of the country were all destroyed. Faring southward, the rinderpest struck Khama’s country, a land which is far richer in beeves than Rhodesia. The Bechuanas and Bamangwato were mighty herd-men. They numbered their cattle at one million. When the rinderpest left them, 800,000 beast lay dead on the veldt, and Khama rejoiced that the percentage of mortality was, comparatively speaking, so low. From Bechuanaland the deadly scourge is travelling to Cape Colony, where it is expected it will eat up the cattle down to the sea. So terrible a visitation, extending over so wide an area, is almost unknown in the annals of Africa. The grievous murrain that smote the herds of Pharaoh was but a parochial epidemic compared with this continental catastrophe. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 839.1}

**“Items of Interest” The Present Truth, 12, 53.**

E. J. Waggoner

-The cholera epidemic In Bombay continues to increase. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 846.1}

-The Spanish forces in the Philippines heavily engaged the rebels last week, and were repulsed with severe loss. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 846.2}

-A ton of the water of the Dead Sea, when evaporated yields 187 pounds of salt; a ton of the water of the Atlantic Ocean, 81 pounds; a ton of water of the Pacific, 81 pounds. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 846.3}

-The longest distance to which a projectile has been thrown was at Shoeburyness, on April 15, 1888, when a Longridge wire-bound gun threw a shot 21,858 yards, or 12 miles 238 yards. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 846.4}

-The word “dun” is said to owe its origin to one Joe Dun, a famous bailiff about 1500. He is said to have been so shrewd and dexterous in the collection of dues that his name became proverbial. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 846.5}

-The Czar is presenting the Emperor of Abyssinia with a complete collection of musical instruments horn grand piano down. Russia is making efforts to get a footing along the Red Sea, so as to act as protector of Abyssinia. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 846.6}

-In the Russian Army two days a week are observed as partial fasts-Wednesdays and Fridays-on which days all the soldier gets in the way of food is lentil soup and black bread, and a drink consisting of water in which rye bread has been absorbed. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 846.7}

-An Imperial Bourse law comes into operation in Germany on January 2, 1897, which is very strict in its terms and is intended to do away with the dealing in “options” and “futures,” and make all stock gambling hereafter more difficult and less profitable. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 846.8}

-The world’s production of gold in 1896 will reach at least ?44,000,000. The output is unprecedented. It is over twice as large as that of 1886, nearly equal to that of gold and silver combined in that year. Furthermore, the indications all point to a steady increase in the world’s production for years in the future. {PTUK December 31, 1896, p. 846.9}